The TIMES of INDIA ANNUAL

1949

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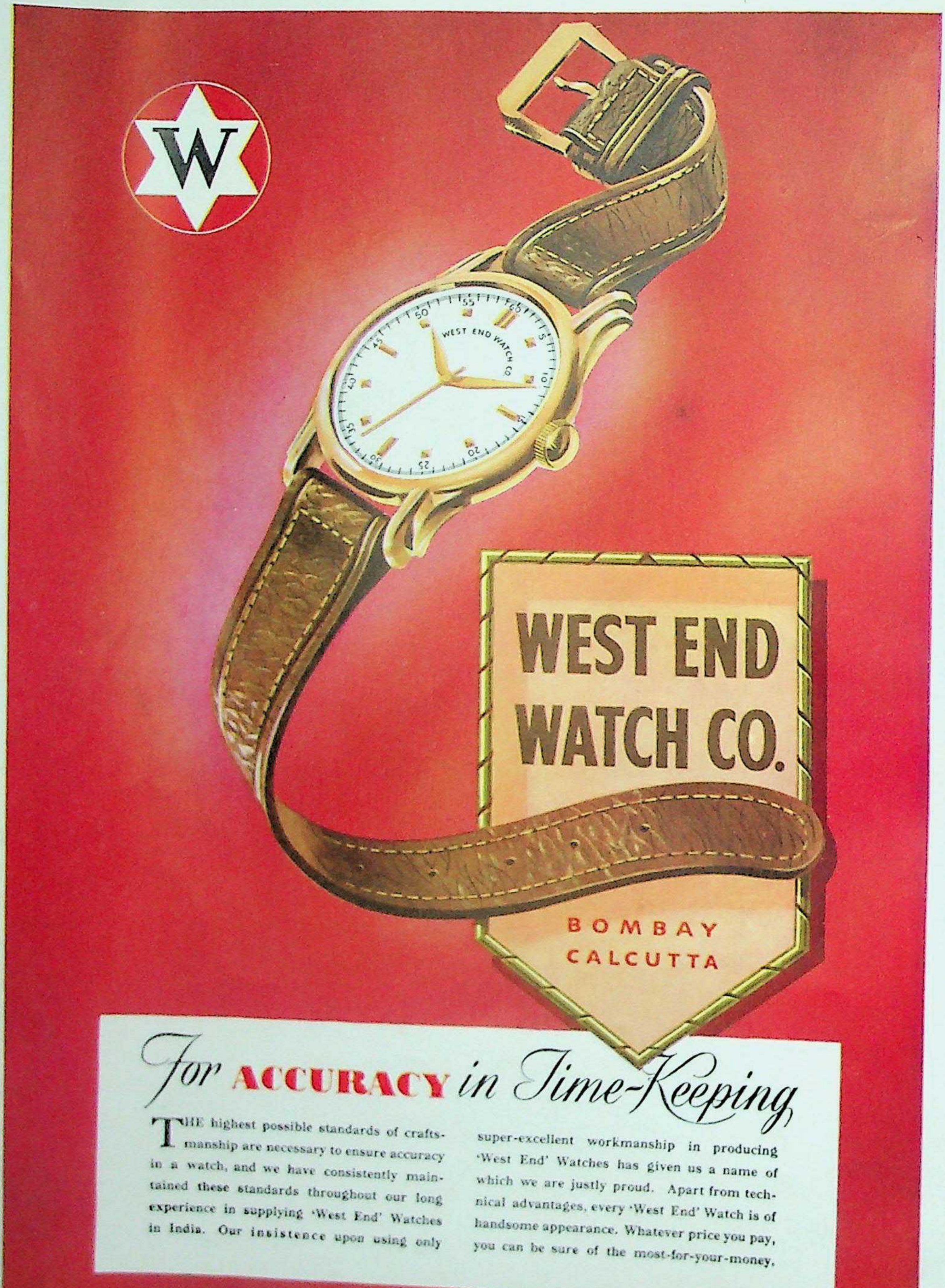

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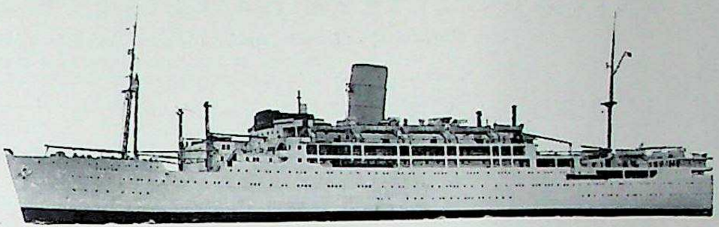

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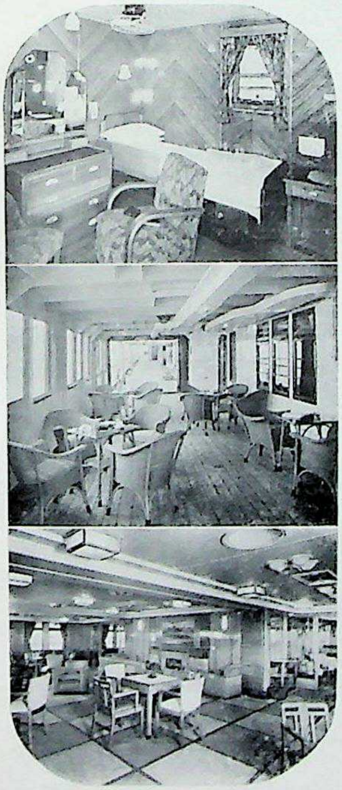

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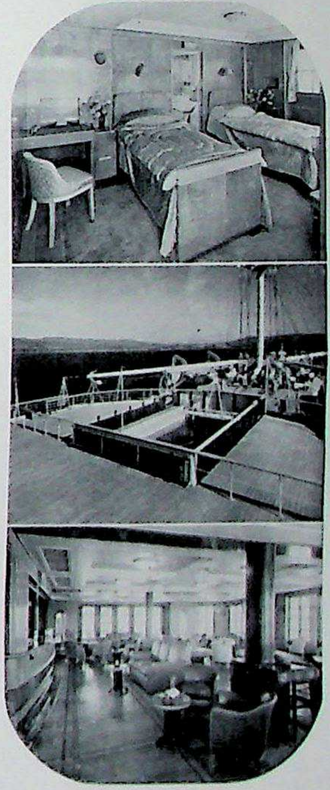

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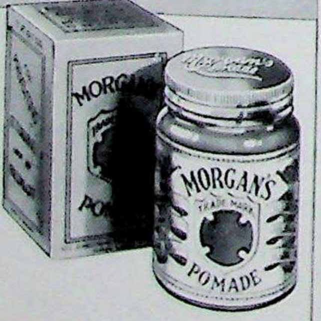

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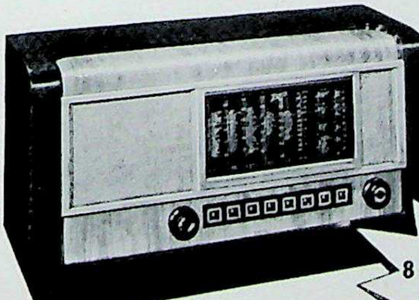

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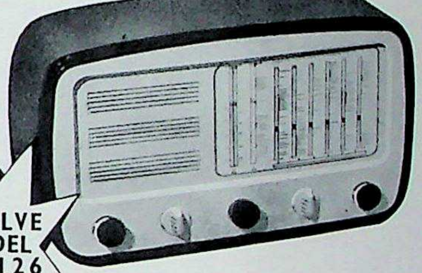

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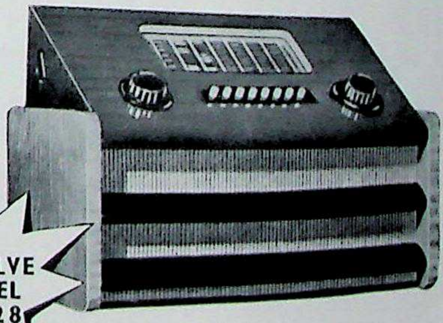

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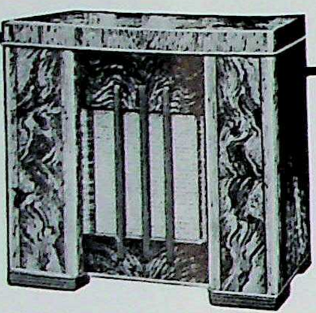

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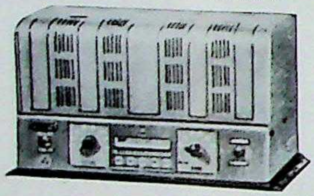

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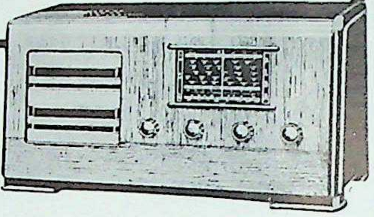

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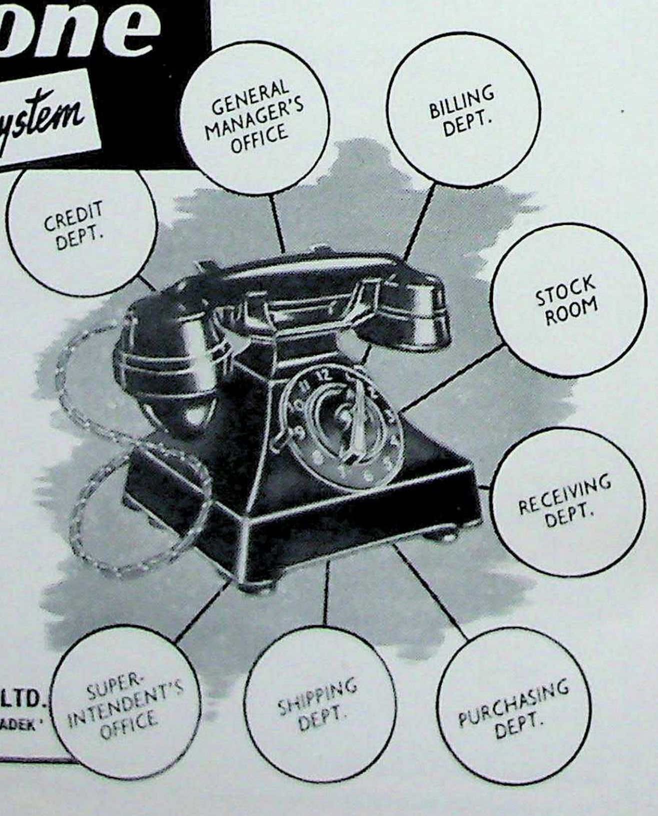
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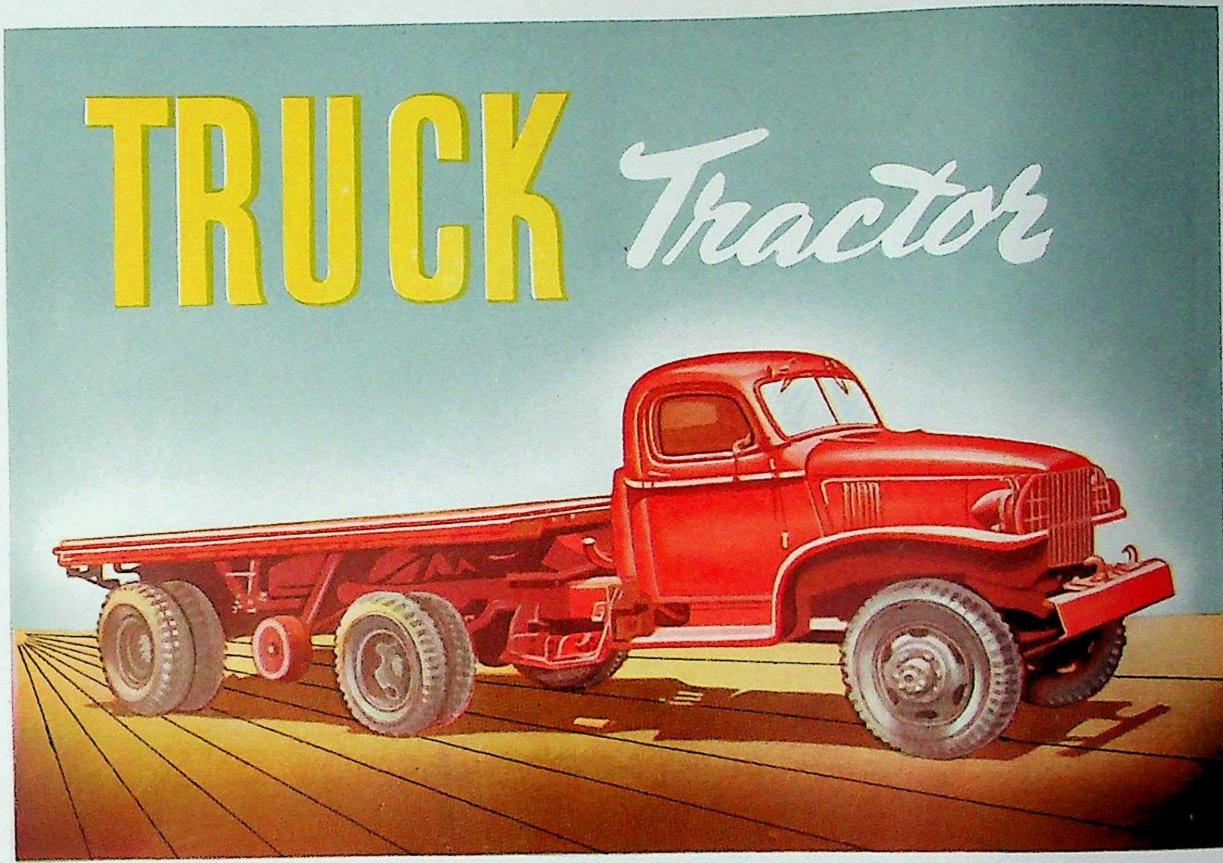

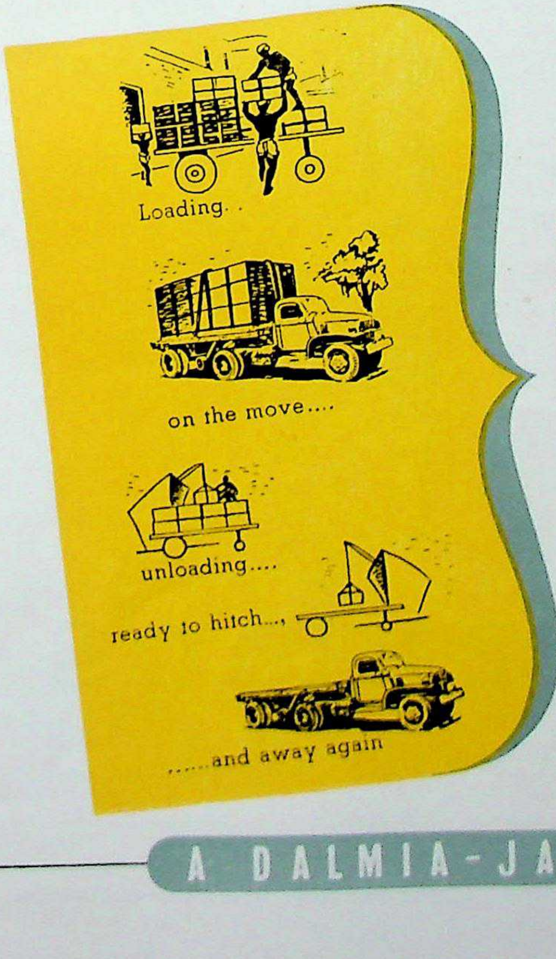

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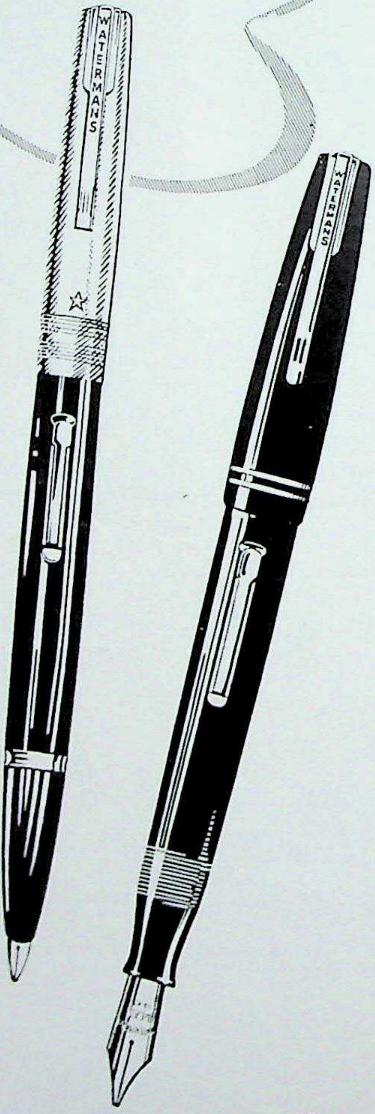

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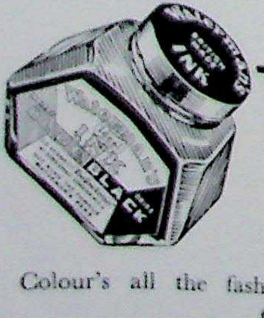

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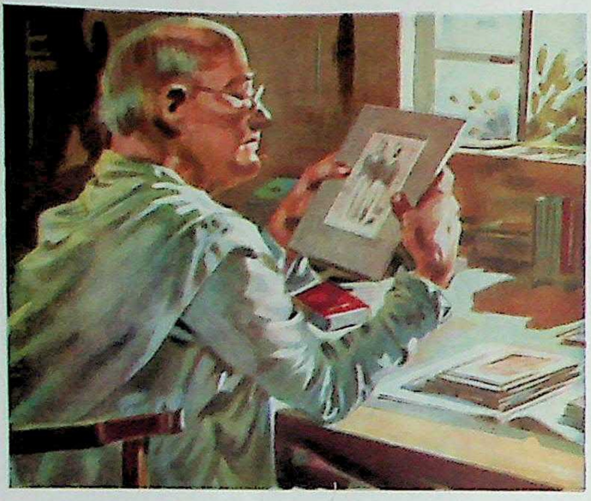


RIVALS NO MORE

by PHILIP WOODRUFF

THE old man sat near the window of the room that for forty years had been his study. Here he had worked on his cases for court, his lectures and articles on law, his two books on land tenure in the hills. Here he had written letters to his sons. Here he sat now, near the end of his life, sadly turning over the dusty relics of his seventy years.

He read slowly through a little bundle of certificates from his teachers at the school the American missionaries had started sixty years ago. They had thought well of him and in fact for a long time he had been their best pupil. He had been one of the first Brahmans to go there, for to begin with the Brahmans had regarded the school with suspicion and his father had told him long afterwards with what misgivings he had sent him. But it had turned out all right, they had not interfered in any way with his religion and because his father had taken the risk, he had been the first boy from the district to go to a university in the plains. He and Bhowani Dat.

And even as he thought of Bhowani Dat he picked up a photograph of the two of them together, taken by their old headmaster when they came back from their first year at Lucknow. The print was old and faded, the colour of cream and burnt almonds, but you could still see the two young men, stiff and self-conscious in their blazers and flannel trousers. For they had been athletes as well as scholars, he and Bhowani Dat, neck and neck in everything. Mohan Ram gazed at the faint likeness, remembering how much it had meant to him then that Bhowani Dat had beaten him in the high jump, how pleased he had been that he had won his hockey colours a month the sooner of the two. How breathlessly he had waited for the results of the B.A. examinations! It had seemed then almost more important to him that his name should be higher in the list than Bhowani Dat's than that he should get his first at all.

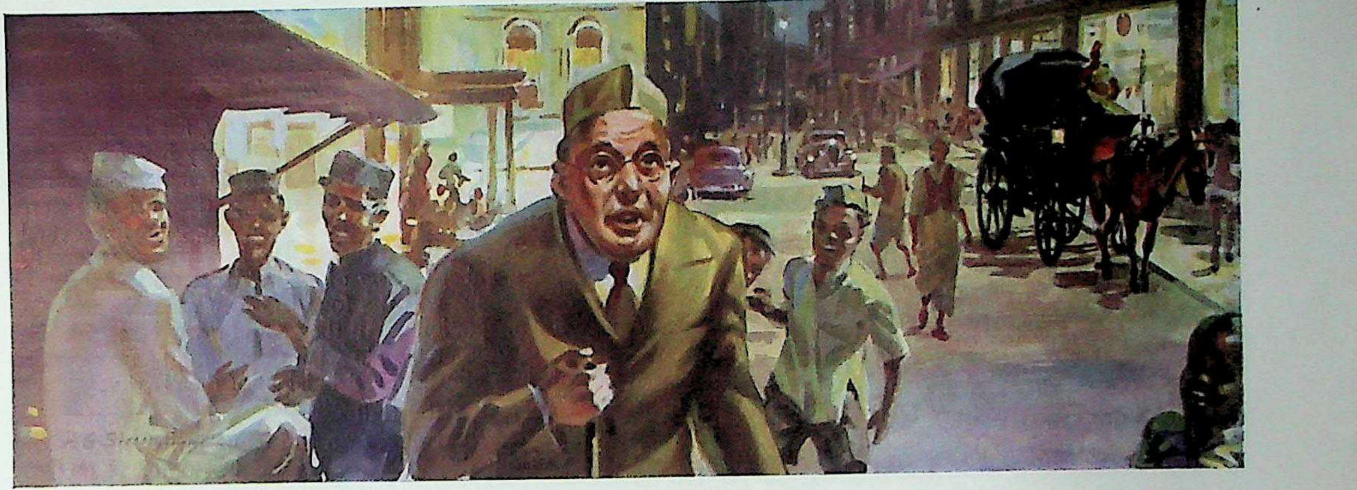
And in the end it was he who had been head of the list and Bhowani Dat four places below him. He had always managed to keep that lead in the things that mattered most, but it was a short lead, and he had only just kept it. He had been first to be President of the Pokhra Bar Association, first to be Chairman of the District Board, first to be a Rai Bahadur. But in both offices he had been succeeded by his rival and he remembered his secret disappointment when only three years after himself Bhowani Dat too had appeared in the New Year's Honours List with a title.

Still, in the things that he told himself mattered most, he had kept the lead. His books on land tenure were the sounder, everyone recognised that, and the reason was that he had put his work before everything else and stuck to his last. He had not tried to win cheap applause by publishing books on subjects frivolous compared with the law, folklore and peasant songs and superstitions. He had never aspired to be Chairman of the Rural Development Association or the Fruit-growers League. That was the way Bhowani Dat had tried to catch up with him, but Mohan Ram felt that though his rival had gained ground he had never quite succeeded in drawing level.

Great days they had been, those early days when the two of them had been alone, opposing each other in every important case. Every litigant knew that if he couldn't get Mohan Ram as his counsel he must try to get Bhowani Dat, and if he could get neither of them he was lost. Great days indeed, as strenuous for the body as for the mind, for often they had to walk thirty miles over hill-tracks to appear before the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner in camp and argue a case at the end of it. There was no Judge in those far-off times, so that the Commissioner's court was the highest in Kumaon and every chance of a case before him must be taken. But there was no way of getting to his camp but by walking, and if you were booked up with petty cases the day before, well, there was nothing for it but to start after the courts closed in Pokhra, travel fifteen or twenty miles that evening, as much again next morning, and turn up spruce in a white tie at ten o'clock.

"These lawyers of the hills earn their fees as much with their legs as with their tongues," a Commissioner had said of them once, and it was true. Great days indeed, and when Bhowani Dat was a helpless cripple I could still walk my thirty miles over the hills in a day, thought Mohan Ram with a touch of fire re-lighting his face.

But the glow of triumph and emulation that he always felt in remembering his rivalry with Bhowani Dat died quickly today, for the old man was in trouble and his heart ached. His eyes fell to the next paper in his drawer and the lines of pain and sadness deepened



'He was strangely out of place and his speech was hard to understand. He did not even notice the smiles and nudges, but went dazedly on, asking, asking.'

in his face, still strangely a child's face that had grown old. It was a photo of his elder son, taken at eighteen when he too had set out for Lucknow. There they stood, father and son, Mohan Ram proud and smiling in his white tie and dress coat, the first ever worn in Pokhra, and Sita Ram by his side in college blazer and straw hat, dressed just as his father had been in that earlier photograph. Great things the father had hoped of Sita Ram, and not least had been his hope that the boy would do better than Bhowani Dat's eldest. But terrible had been his disappointment. He remembered their talk the night before his son left, how he had warned him against letting politics interfere with his university career. He had spoken carefully and with understanding of what his son might feel. It was not, he had explained, that he did not know how compelling the call of nationalism might seem to an ardent youth.

"I too," he had said, "want to see our country free and independent, but the time is not yet. If you listen to some of those you may meet in Lucknow you will ruin your own future prospects without helping your country and you may even harm my career at the Bar."

But his words had not borne fruit. Before the end of his first year Sita Ram had written to say that he had joined the Congress party and taken a share in a student's demonstration against some action of the Government's. It was not the act itself but the disobedience that had made Mohan Ram furious. Here at this very table he had sat down at once and in his anger written a hot and foolish letter, scolding the boy for what he had done and telling him his allowance was cut-off until he apologised. He had never meant it, Mohan Ram had told himself a hundred times since; he would have restored the allowance at the first sign of repentance. But no answer had come; he had waited a week before he wrote again and the second letter had been wiser, hinting at understanding and forgiveness. There was no answer to that either. He had never heard from his son again from that day to this.

Letter after letter he had written, each a little more conciliatory than the last. Only two had come to him, one from the college authorities informing him that his son had disappeared, one from a tutor who had to some degree been in the boy's confidence and who believed Sita Ram had taken the robe of a sanyasi—that was all. Nothing from his son. Mohan Ram had been too proud to go and look for him, too proud and too busy at the Bar. Tears rolled slowly down his face now as he thought of his pride and his eagerness in affairs. And then for a moment anger flared in his mind against Bhowani Dat, for he would have gone, he was sure, if he had not feared losing ground to Bhowani Dat. Bhowani Dat with his six sons. The look of happiness on his face in his last days. It was he who had cost Mohan Ram his son.

But it did not yet occur to him to question whether the things in which he had striven with his rival had really been those that mattered most.

His anger passed and he sat there, his cheeks still wet with tears, the photographs in his idle hands, his mind for the moment mercifully a blank. Then he heard children's voices below his window and he rose to look out. From that window he had often gazed North across miles of empty space to where the Himalayas, arranged in their winter majesty, raised proud heads to heaven, but he did not look at them today. His eyes fell to the narrow road before him where a group of small children were laughing at their play. His lips moved and he began to speak. He could still quote hundreds of lines from the classics, both Sanskrit and English; now it was Sanskrit that he spoke, the words rolling sonorously from his tongue, the consonants sharp and spitting, the vowels majestically prolonged. He said:—

> "*Their teeth are small and well-formed; when they smile, their teeth shine like stars.*
> *They laugh without cause and their speech is not the speech of men.*
> *When a mother has washed her son, his small body is sleek;*
> *He runs to the ashpan and pours ashes on his head.*
> *She sees her labour undone but she laughs as she takes him in her arms;*
> *She thinks no woman in the world so happy as she.*"

When he had said the lines, Mohan Ram sank back in his chair, put his head between his hands and fairly sobbed. For now there were no children in his house at all.

Only a month ago he had been happy. When he had lost his elder son, he had taken the younger to his heart. He would have had to admit that Govind Ram was not the equal of Sita Ram in the ways that win glory in the eyes of men, neither as scholar nor athlete, but he was affectionate and obedient, bringing balm to his father's wounded pride. And Govind Ram's son showed the same qualities, a charming child, who at three years old would run to his grandfather for the petting and encouragement he was sure of. Then three weeks ago the little boy had been taken sick and in a few days he had been carried away by some complaint of the stomach. His death had been a blow to his grandfather, a blow hard to bear, but it was nothing to what followed, for on the fifth day his son Govind Ram had left the house and that evening in who knows what paroxysm of grief and weakness had ended his life. His body had been found in a dak bungalow twenty miles away, and Mohan Ram had had to perform for his own son the death ceremonies which Govind Ram had just performed for his, thus for three generations turning back the course of nature.

Before this had happened, only a month ago, Mohan Ram had felt that his life was drawing to a happy end. His rival Bhowani Dat had gone before him; there was no more contest or strife on earth. He had a son and a grandson to carry out the ritual at his funeral pyre; there was nothing to keep him here. He had done his work and could wait peacefully for the end. But now his life had fallen in ruins. All he had worked for seemed meaningless. He could not go in peace now for there was no one to carry on his name. He must live till the anniversary of his son's death and go through the ceremonies which his son should have performed for him. For I am his son now, he thought, and there is no one after me.

And now the thought came to him that perhaps after all there was hope. Twenty years ago he had been too proud and too busy to look for Sita Ram, but now his pride was gone and he was busy no longer. Surely if he went and looked for the boy in the holy places of Hindustan he would find him, and even if he did not how could an old man spend his last days better? But surely he would find him and surely then if he went to his son with the tears pouring down his face and hands joined in supplication, surely the boy's heart would be softened and he would forgive his father and be joined to him again?

Mohan Ram rose slowly to his feet and began to make his preparations for the long journey in search of his son.

He left two days later, a sturdy old figure in his baggy suit of soft hill made tweed, his knees a little bent, for the knees of an old hillman are always a little bent by the long descents, the long laborious climbs; but his head was erect, his cheeks still coloured by the sharp air of the mountains. He looked what he was, a sturdy old country lawyer, still half peasant at heart behind his weight of learning and grief.

The journey that in his young days had taken two or three days' march, with luggage following on a mule, was now only a matter of a few uncomfortable hours in a lorry. He sat, jolting and swaying, his mind an unhappy blank, blind to the wild scenery of gorge, precipice and torrent that he knew so well, conscious only of loneliness and sorrow.

He went first to Lucknow. He found the tutor who had known his son. The tutor, retired now from the university, remembered Sita Ram, for he had liked him, but all he knew was that the boy had for a time been in some way connected with a temple in Benares. There too Mohan Ram went; the priests were sympathetic but they had not seen Sita Ram for several years. They believed that he had laid aside the sanyasi's robe, remembering the old Hindu precept that youth is for marriage and the foundation of a family and old age for meditation. All they could do was to give the name of another temple where there might be news, a temple in Mathura, the Brindaban of the classics.

There too the trail was cold. They knew at the temple that the young man had temporarily returned to the world; they believed he was in Bombay but they did not know for certain.

Bombay was bewildering, hot, noisy, busy, and the old man was dazed and sick with the clamour and uncertainty. He wandered here and there among the crowds, going to Hindu hotels and eating-houses, asking for news of a hill Brahman who had been a Sanyasi. He was strangely out of place and his speech was hard to understand. He did not even notice the smiles and nudges but he went dazedly on, asking, asking. And at last he heard of a young man whose description answered. But his informant knew only that the young man had planned to go to Delhi.

Mohan Ram turned with some slight relief to the North, but his heart was sick with hope deferred and he hardly dared to pray that his search might be rewarded. It was hot in Delhi, hotter even than Bombay, far too hot for an old man whose life had been spent in the thin sweet air of the hills. But he went on with his plan. Wherever men met to eat or sleep or rest, he asked questions, moving on wearily when heads were shaken, without thought of food or rest for himself.

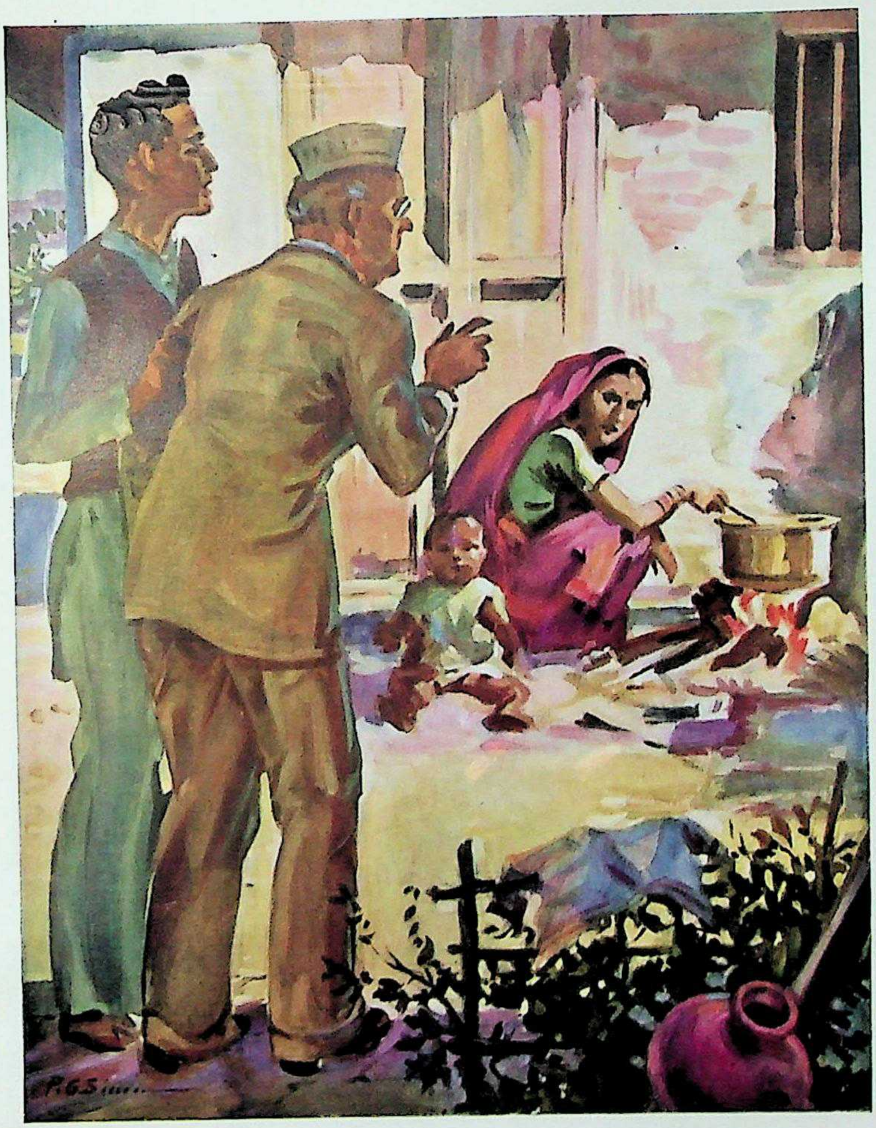
On the fourth day his question was overheard by a slight well-made youngster whose light complexion and boyish look told that he too was a hillman. He looked at the old man with eyes that were dark and merry but full of compassion.

"There is such a one," he said, "there is Badri Narain."

At the sound of this name, Mohan Ram's heart leapt, for if Sita Ram had taken a new name, this might well be the name he would choose. The shrine of Badri Nath had always been dear to the boy, for, though he had never been there in his boyhood, he had gazed every day across the sun-drenched valleys to where the square icy crown of Chaukamba rose above the purple foothills. The shrine lay in a gash in the hills behind Chaukamba; father and son had looked together at the mountain and talked of the temple and the pilgrimage that one day they would make there together.

"Can you take me to him?" Mohan Ram asked eagerly.

The young man nodded. He took the old man's hands and led him through the streets. They did not talk. Mohan Ram was deadly weary; nothing kept him moving but his one purpose to find his son. There was no room for any other thought in his mind, but he felt the sympathy the young man gave him and was more at peace than he had been since his journey began.



They came to a house. There was a little court before it where a woman was cooking food on an open fire, a child playing by her side. She looked at them without interest or curiosity.

"Badri Narain is out," she said. "He will be back for supper. When? Who knows when? When he comes."

"My house is near," said the friendly young man. "You must come and rest there. I too am a Brahman and from the hills. You must eat and rest."

Mohan Ram suffered himself to be led away. He ate a little of the food that was brought to him. He was a very tired old man, too tired to eat much. When he had eaten, he wanted to start at once for Badri Narain's house, but his new friend made him rest for a few minutes before he moved. As he rested, he told something of his story, a few broken words, but enough to make it clear that he was looking for the son he had lost. He was uneasy; as strength came back to him with rest and food, unease came too and he could think only of his search and the hope that perhaps it was ended. He asked no questions of his host; he was hardly conscious of his presence, aware only that here was sympathy and kindness.

At last they started. It was not far; they were at the house and this time Badri Narain was at home. He came to the door and the lamplight was clear on his face. There was no mistake; it was Sita Ram, Sita Ram strangely altered, older, harder, his face more set, but Sita Ram without doubt.

Mohan Ram stepped forward, tears pouring down his face, hands raised in supplication.

"My son," he said, "Sita Ram, my son." And he could say no more.

Sita Ram looked at him deliberately.

"No," he said, "my name is not Sita Ram. It is Badri Narain. Sita Ram died twenty years ago."

"Forgive me, come back to me," Mohan Ram sank on his knees.

Sita Ram shook his head.

"You cast me off because I put our country before wealth and gain, because you thought it would harm you in the eyes of the English to have a son who was a patriot. Now you can earn no more and now the English are going, thanks to the sacrifices of those who put their country first. Now you come back to me, now when the battle is won and the English are going. It is too late. I shall not help you to curry favour with new masters. I have no father and Sita Ram is dead."

He closed the door.

Mohan Ram remained motionless on his knees, tears rolling slowly down his face. His search was ended.

For a little there was silence. Then the young man who had guided him spoke:—

"Father, let me be your son," he said. "My father is dead and I am the youngest of many sons. He can spare me and he would wish to spare me, I know."

The old man did not seem to hear at first but when the words were repeated he rose slowly to his feet and without a word took the arm of his new son. He went with him to his house, very old and bent. On the way he stopped.

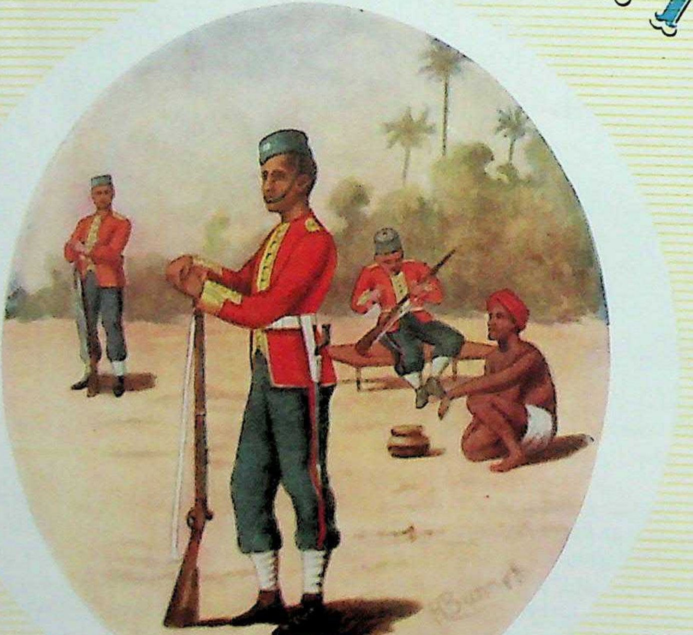
"Who are you, my son?" he asked.

"My father was Bhowani Dat of Pokhra," was the answer.

In his heart the old man felt a strange peace. His long rivalry with Bhowani Dat was ended now.

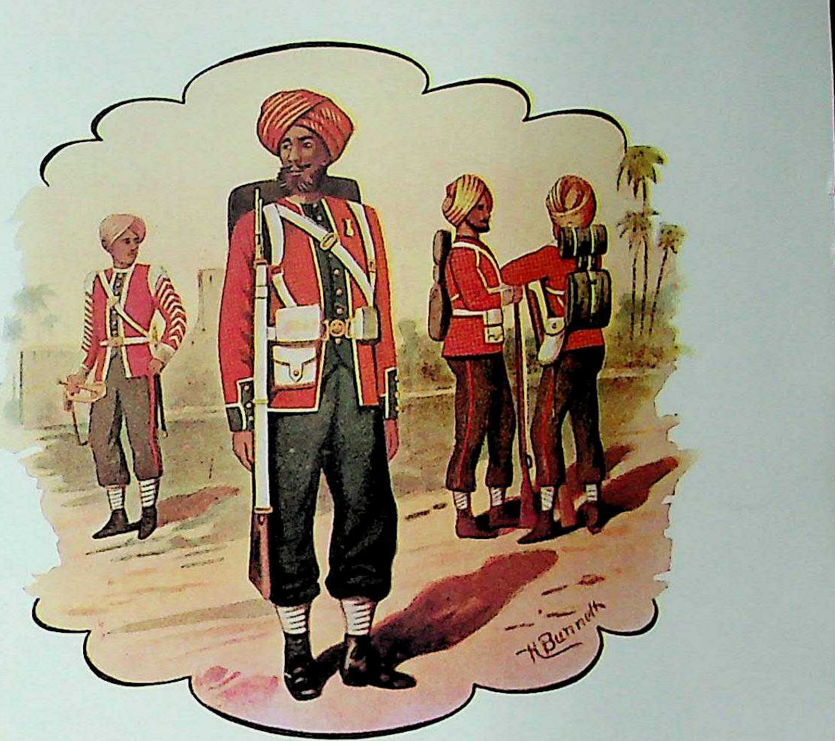
A
Field-Marshal
Remembers

THE SIMPLICITY OF YESTERDAY

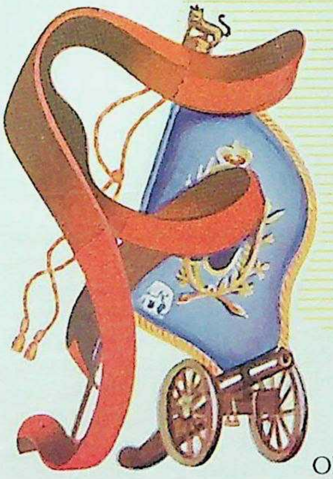


By

Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck,
G.C.B., G.C.I.E., D.S.O., O.B.E.



15TH SIKHS



FORTY-four years ago, in the month of April 1904 to be exact, I, as a boy of nineteen, joined the old Indian Army. I had already served for a year with a British Regiment, as the custom then was, and this first experience of soldiering in India is still vivid in my memory. I was one of thirty youngsters, all fresh from Sandhurst, who sailed from Tilbury in March 1903 in the old P. & O. BRITANNIA. Landing at Bombay we were put up in Watson's Annexe, now long since swept away, and given cubicles on the topmost floor of the hotel. No electric fans of course, only the slow and soothing sweep of the old hand-pulled punkah —very efficient so long as the puller kept awake! No modern bathrooms—just the simple tin tub. Then came the long and fascinating train journey upcountry with its new sights, smells and sounds, crowding our senses all the way from Bombay to Kathgodam below Naini Tal.

Finally, the last stage—a three days ride on hired ponies up the hill through Bhim Tal and its lake and Khairna with its mountain stream teeming with fish, to Ranikhet. There I joined the King's Shropshire Light Infantry (the 85th).

Ranikhet, which, much to my regret, I have never since revisited, remains in my mind as a most pleasant little hill station, looking across the ranges and the valleys to the great snow peaks of Nanda Devi and Trisool. At once, I fell under the spell of the Himalayas and it binds me still! In those days there were no motor cars or even tongas plying from the plains to Ranikhet; one had either to walk or to ride.

Followed the summer and the "rains", first in barracks and, later, in "cholera camp" on the hills outside the cantonment itself. An outbreak of cholera was almost an annual event in most regiments at this time of year and the invariable remedy was to send the affected company or, even, the whole regiment out into camp, monsoon or no monsoon, until it was free from this greatly dreaded scourge. In recent years, an outbreak of cholera in the Army is a rare event, thanks to the immense advances in the medical care of the soldier and to the great improvement generally in methods of hygiene and sanitation.

With the coming of the cold weather in October, we moved down to Bareilly, there to live under canvas on its broad "maidan" for six months or so. Bareilly, then, was a paradise for the young officer. The winter climate was truly superb, as it still is, and all kinds of games and field sports could be had at small cost.

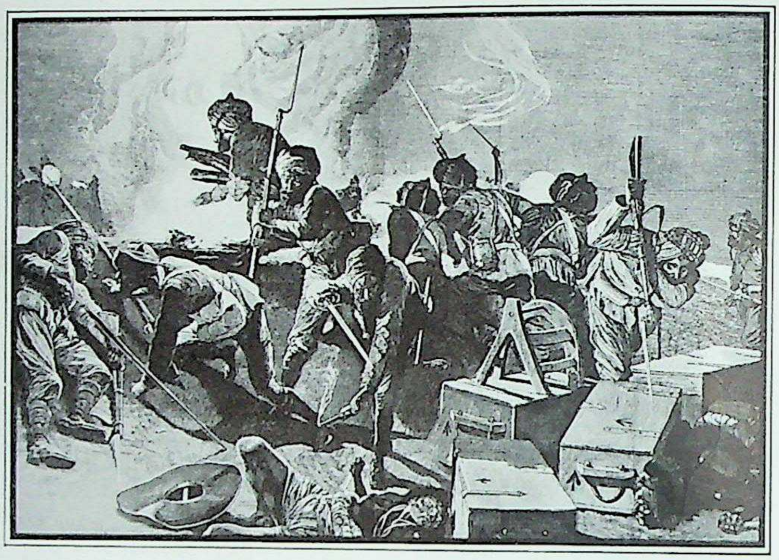
Those, too, were the days of brilliant uniforms and full dress parades. I have never lost the wonderful impression I got from my first sight of an Indian cavalry regiment—the old 14th Murray's Jat Lancers—in full dress on a mounted parade. This fine "rissala" composed entirely of Jats from the Punjab and the Eastern United Provinces, were clad in dark blue "kurtas"—long skirted loose coats—with scarlet kummerbunds (sashes) round their waists, scarlet puggrees on their heads, white breeches and blue putties. On top of all some four hundred scarlet and white pennons fluttered in the breeze from their steel pointed lances. The general effect was magnificent and not to be easily forgotten.

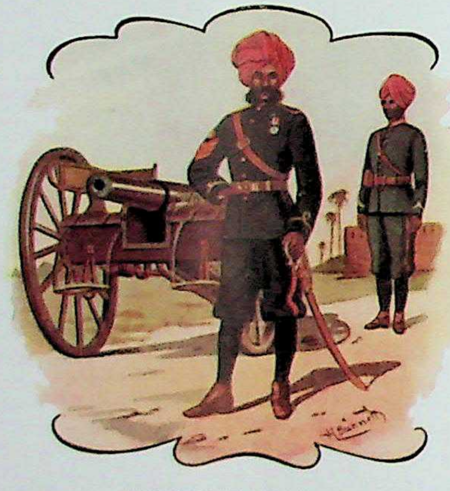
* * *

I joined my "Native" (to use the term then in vogue) Regiment in the old cantonment of Fyzabad on the banks of the Gogra River, near to the very holy and ancient city of Ayodhia or Oudh.

The regiment to which I was posted was then known as the 62nd Punjabis—the old "Basath Number" as the men called it. It was one of the half dozen or more battalions of the old Madras Army which had very recently been turned into Punjabi regiments by

During the Mahdi rebellion in Egypt in 1885, an expedition was sent from India to assist the British troops at Suakim. They arrived too late however to save Gordon who had been murdered at Khartoum. The picture shows a surprise night attack on the Indian camp by the fanatical followers of the Mahdi. ▶



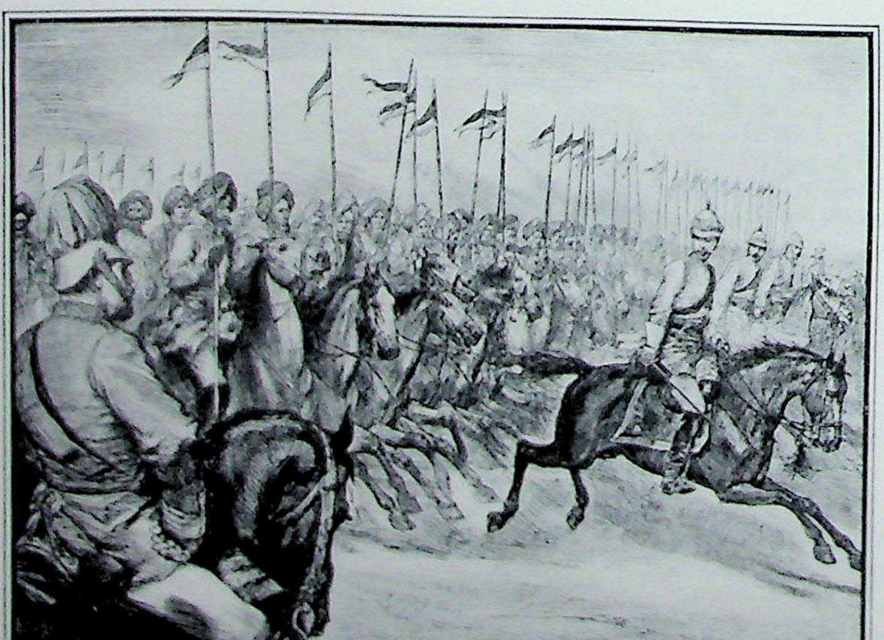


THE BOMBAY ARTILLERY

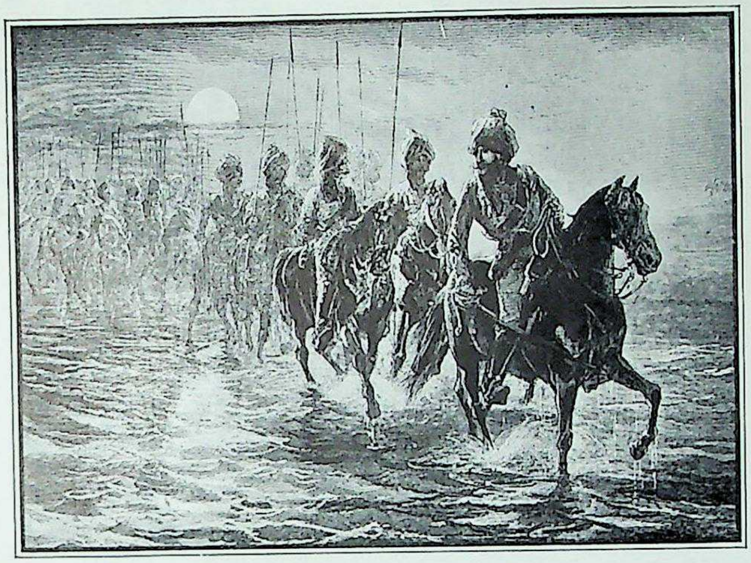
Lord Kitchener, who was then Commander-in-Chief in India. The Madras Army, famous for its fighting qualities in the early wars of the English in India under Wellesley and other Generals, had fallen somewhat into disrepute, chiefly because the frontiers of the Empire had moved steadily further and further to the north, thereby causing the Sikh, the Punjabi Muslim, the Dogra, the Rajput and the Pathan to become popular as fighting men.

I shall always be glad that, in the last and greatest of wars, I was able to help to restore the soldier from Southern India to his proper pride of place in the armies of India. The Madras soldier amply justified the confidence thus placed in him and he has, I hope, a great future before him in the army of the new India.

Joining an Indian Regiment in those days was a new and distinctly strange experience for a very young and raw officer, such as I was. When I reported



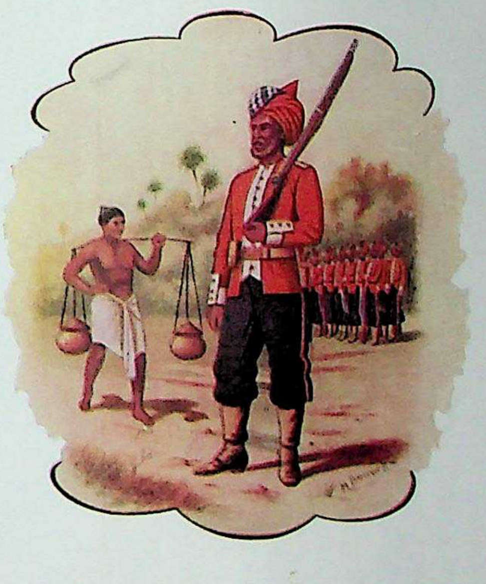
◀ *A charge of the Sixth Bengal Lancers in review before the Duke of Cambridge at Malta. These troops formed part of the First Indian Expeditionary Force sent to Europe in 1878 for readiness in case the Russo-Turkish war, which was being fought at that time, should assume a dangerous aspect.*



The Eleventh Bengal Lancers crossing the Kunar River at night during the Second Afghan War which was conducted in order to drive Russian influence out of Amir. During this campaign Lord Roberts relieved the British garrison at Kandahar by marching his 10,000 soldiers, 7,000 of whom were Indians, a distance of 310 miles in twenty days over the roughest of country. ◄

Bottom :—The last climb on the road to LING-TU which ascends 7,000 feet in seven miles. During the Tibet Expedition in 1904, Indian soldiers formed the bulk of the military escort which accompanied Colonel Younghusband on his treaty mission to the Dalai Lama. They braved the frigid climate of ' the roof of the world ' and valiantly fought the Tibetans who had entrenched themselves in their natural fortresses ; finally entering Lhasa, the ' forbidden city.' ▼

FIRST MADRAS PIONEERS

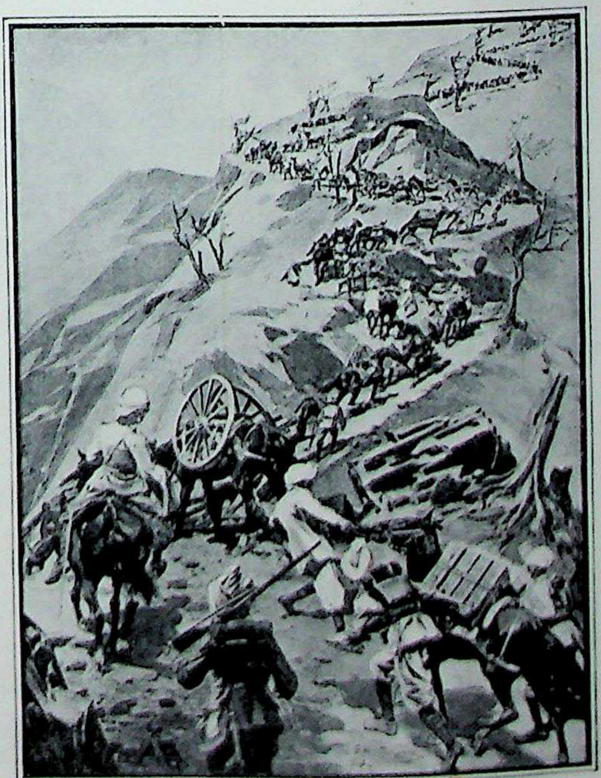


myself at Fyzabad, the pleasant cold weather was coming to an end, and the leave season had just opened for those British Officers, whose turn it was to go to England for their six or eight months furlough. Neither officers nor men were allowed to go on long leave in the cold weather months as it was in the winter that our serious battle training was done—in training camps and at " manœuvres " as they were called. So, instead of the twenty to thirty Officers to be found in the Officers' mess of a British infantry regiment, our " mess " consisted of some five or six Officers only throughout the summer. The wives of the married officers, as was the invariable custom in those days, betook themselves to the hills and went off to England and, for the six or seven long months of the hot weather and the " rains " our small community became an Eve-less Eden !

As the 62nd Punjabis were a very new regiment in their new guise of Punjabis, the vast majority of the men in the ranks were young soldiers of less than two years service in the Army. They were fine lads, fresh from the fields and villages of the Eastern Punjab, the mountains of the Kashmir border, north of Rawalpindi, the pleasant hills and vales of the Hazara District bordering the Indus and the wide and open plains of Rajputana. Sikhs, Punjabis, Rajputs and Pathans—all fine soldiers, each with their own merits and failings and each differing from the other in character, temperament and religion. What a fascinating collection of men with whom to live and work in the always present hope of one day leading them in battle.

With such men to command, no wonder the young British Officer became imbued with an almost fanatical pride in his men and with an abiding affection for them.

In a brand new battalion such as ours, it was natural enough that zeal and keenness of all ranks should be great. It was indeed terrific—no other word could describe it ! It was our job to earn the official hall-mark—" Fit for Active Service "—in the shortest possible space of time and we went all out to do it ! At the same time, however, the regiment had to rebuild its own barracks, long overdue for repair. This we did with sun-dried bricks and locally made tiles—in our spare time !



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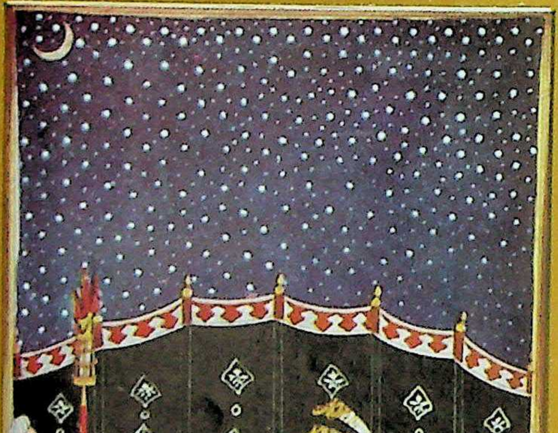

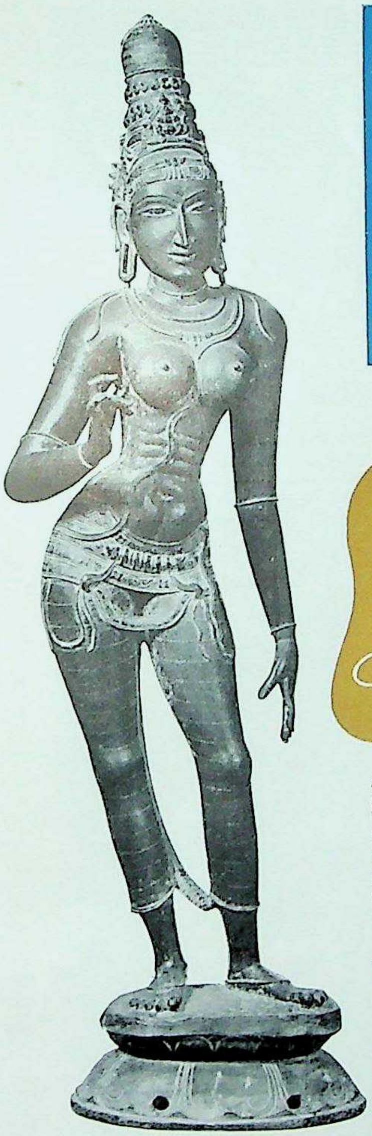

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The goddess Parvati, Siva's consort. A bronze from Tanjore district of about 13th century. From the Government Museum, Madras.

◄

A page from the MS. of the Razmnama dated 1598 A.D. showing Sahadeva, one of the Pandavas, consulting the stars. It is signed 'Dhanu' and is of the Moghul Akbar period. From the Baroda State Museum.

Indian Art through Western Eyes

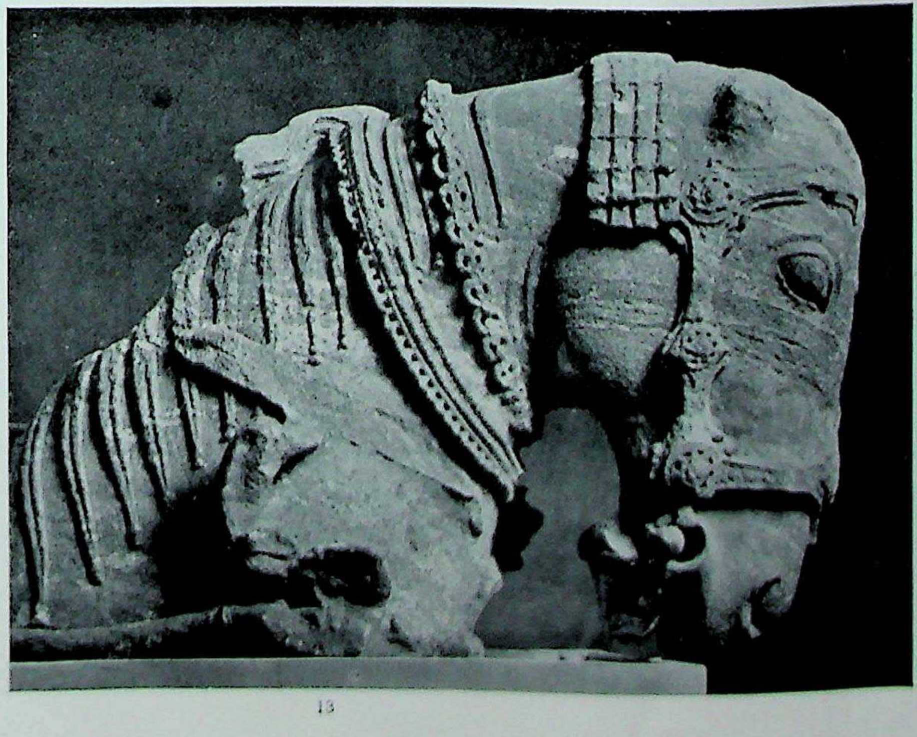
THE ROYAL ACADEMY EXHIBITION IN RETROSPECT

by JOHN IRWIN

LAST Winter nearly 120,000 people passed through the turnstiles of the Royal Academy in London to witness the largest and most comprehensive exhibition of Indian art ever seen in Europe.

The objects, which ranged over a period of more than 4,000 years, were displayed as far as possible chronologically, beginning with a few selected finds from the sites of the ancient Indus Valley civilization and ending with a room devoted to the works of living Indian painters. Besides nearly 100 tons of sculpture, the display included a large number of miniature paintings, jades, carved crystals, jewels, arms, textiles and fine carpets, the majority of them being on loan from Museums and State Collections in India.

It would be difficult to summarize in a few words the response of the Western public, for opinions were many and varied. But there is no doubt that the



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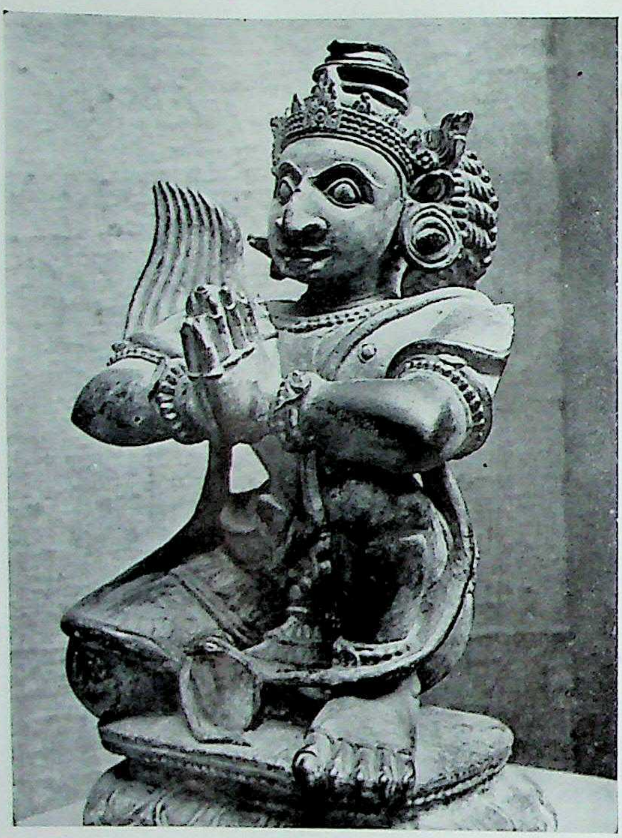
A richly decorated head of a horse in sandstone from Bhuvaneswar, in the Indo-Aryan style of the Orissan group 11th century. From the Indian Museum, Calcutta.



Garuda, the carrier of Vishnu, half bird and half man who lived on snakes. Carved in basalt, during 13th century in Orissa. ◄

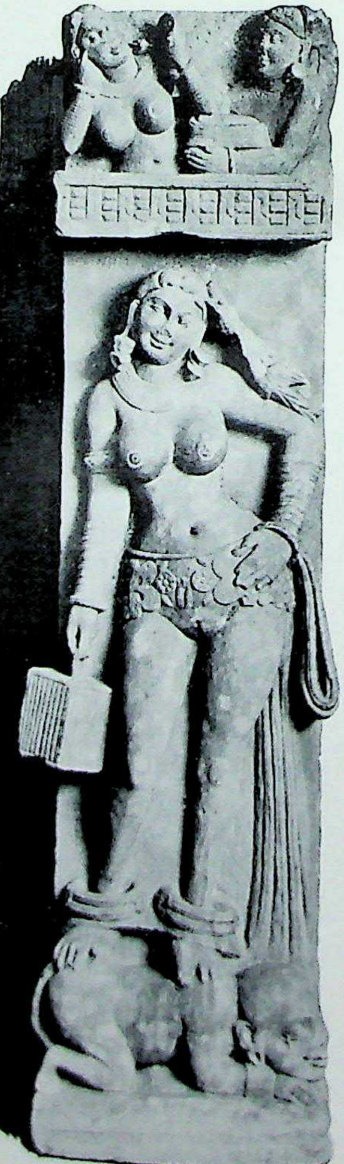
overwhelming majority responded to it as a new and exciting experience, few having previously realised that Indian art was so highly developed or so rich in achievement.

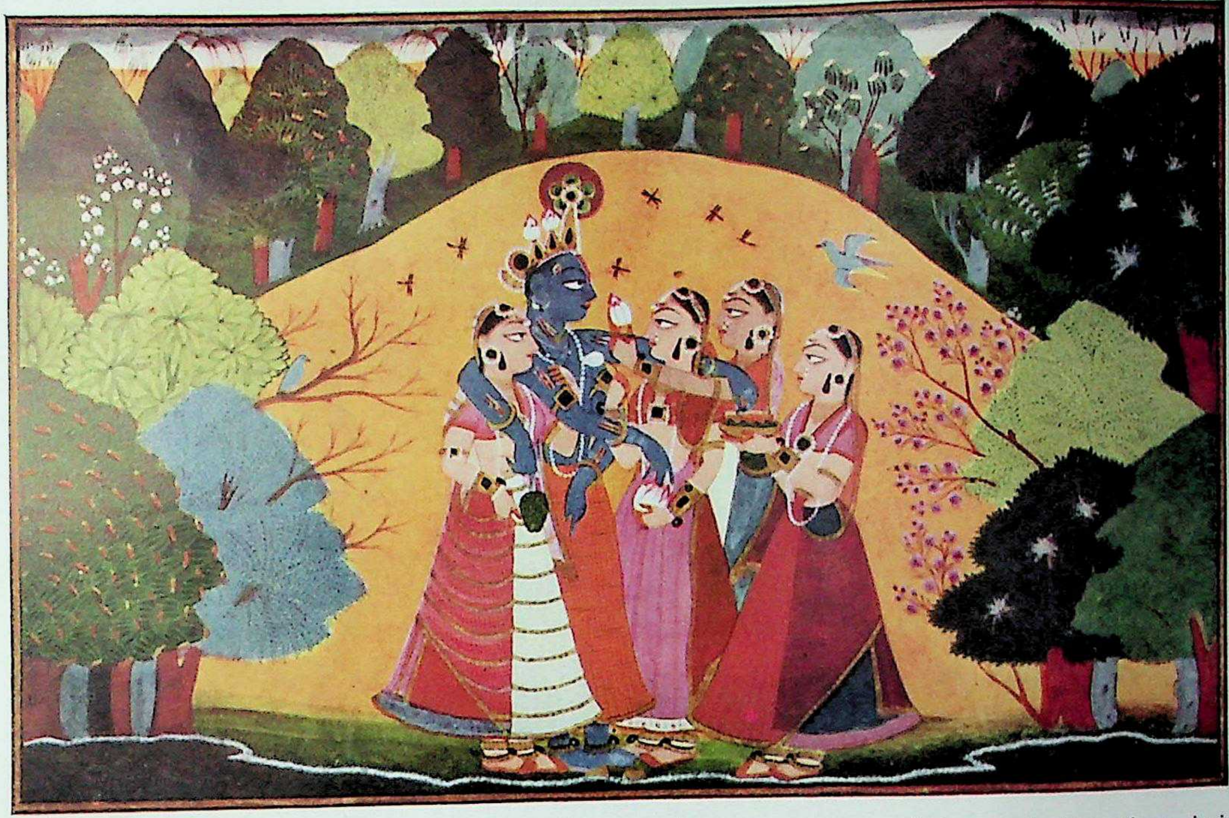
From a Western point of view it would probably be true to say that the aspect which impressed them most, particularly in the sculpture, was the extraordinary blending of sensuousness with spirituality and abstraction. This was very well expressed in one of the most sensitive appreciations of the exhibition by Mr. Colin MacInnes, art critic of the *Observer :*

"The great and unusual gift of the Indian artists seems to me to have been their talent for giving plastic expression to sensual subjects. This is not to deny an inner spiritual quality, which even a European ignorant of Hindu, and Buddhist iconography, can partly sense with his eyes. I mean that there is none of the stony pessimism of other early religious arts, nor that war between the flesh and the spirit that European painting and sculpture so often reveal. Indian art seems wonderfully of this world, however much outside it in its religious implications.

Dagger handles of jade with precious stones set in gold of Mughal workmanship during the 17th century. From the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

A railing pillar in red sandstone from Mathura showing a Pramudita Yakshi standing on a dwarf and carrying a cage. The upper scene represents a lady at her toilet with her attendant. Kushan period 2nd century A.D. From the Indian Museum, Calcutta. ▼





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A leaf from the illustrated series of the Gita Govinda—Pahari school. Bahasoli, 18th century. The painting shows Krishna sporting with the Gopis and is typical of this school of painting.

And as our eyes grow used to its rich and swelling shapes, we become delightedly aware of a generous and healthy love of life in all its forms."

For many of those who were seeing Indian art for the first time, these remarks summed up its particular quality of appeal.

The exhibits which aroused most interest among the early sculptures were undoubtedly the two fine statues of the Mauryan period—the so-called Yaksha and Yakshi from Patna and Didaganj respectively. Mr. Maurice Collis, writing in the *Spectator* described the Didaganj Yakshi as "perhaps the most powerful and beautiful statue which has ever been shown in London." Regarding it as the work of a sculptor of vast experience working in a long tradition, he goes on to say: "This Yakshi is not like an Egyptian statue because, though purporting to represent a celestial, it is not hieratic. It is not like a classical Greek statue, because it is warmer, the face being that of a particular woman. It is more tremendous and pagan than any Renaissance sculpture, and, though in some respects it resembles modern sculpture on account of the emphasis on form, it is more human, because formal theory is not allowed more than its proper share."

More popular among ordinary members of the public was the next gallery devoted to Mathura sculpture of the Kushan period and the contemporary reliefs from Amaravati. Referring specifically to the Yakshis from the Jain Stupas at Mathura (2nd century A.D.), the critic of the *Times* wrote: "In no other art is there such a full comprehension of the forms and volumes of the human body, not obtained by any intellectual power of abstracting from the confusion of natural appearances but by sheer sensuousness and as if the artist had made his generalization, coherent and effective as it is, from nothing else but a caress."

This power of generalization in Indian art most critics found even more effectively expressed in the large figure sculptures of the Gupta period, which stood out dramatically from the walls of the largest gallery in the Royal Academy. The Gupta Buddhas attracted people by the powerful simplicity of

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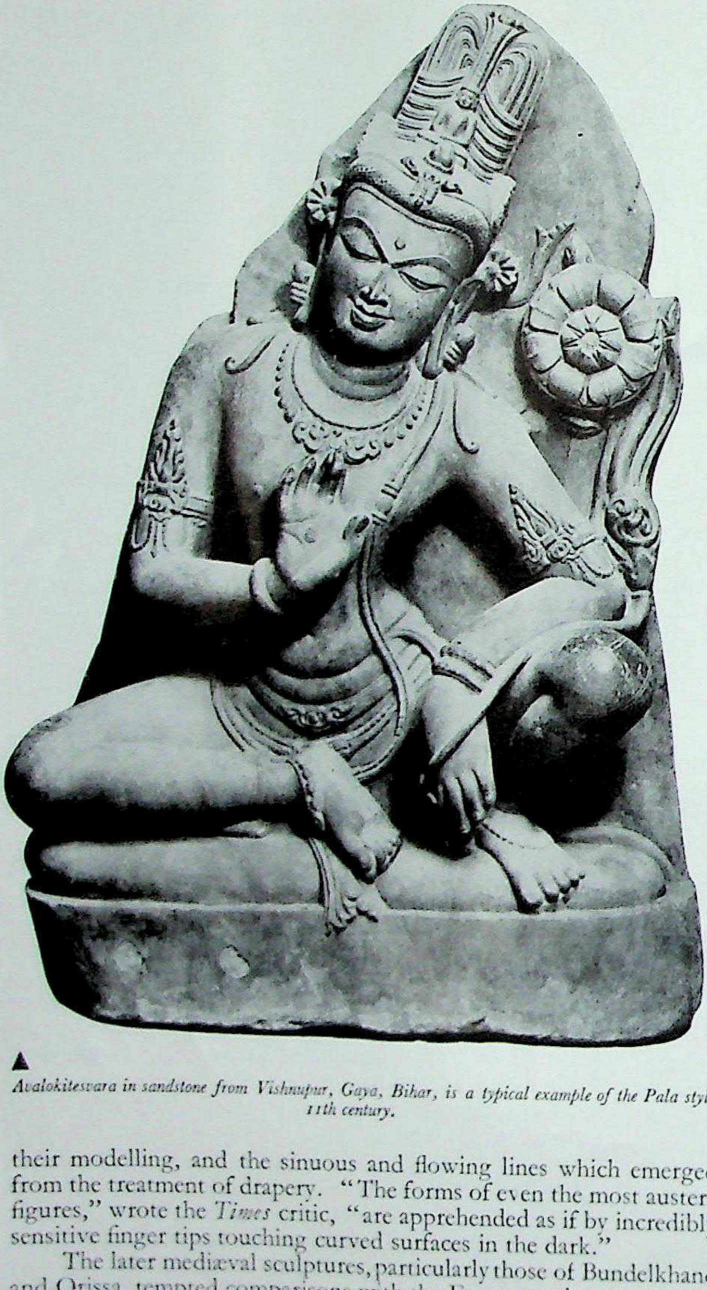
A jade bowl of Mughal work in the 17th century. From the Victoria and Albert Museum.



▲
Avalokitesvara in sandstone from Vishnupur, Gaya, Bihar, is a typical example of the Pala style. 11th century.

A bronze image of Hanuman (the monkey-god) from South India 13th century.
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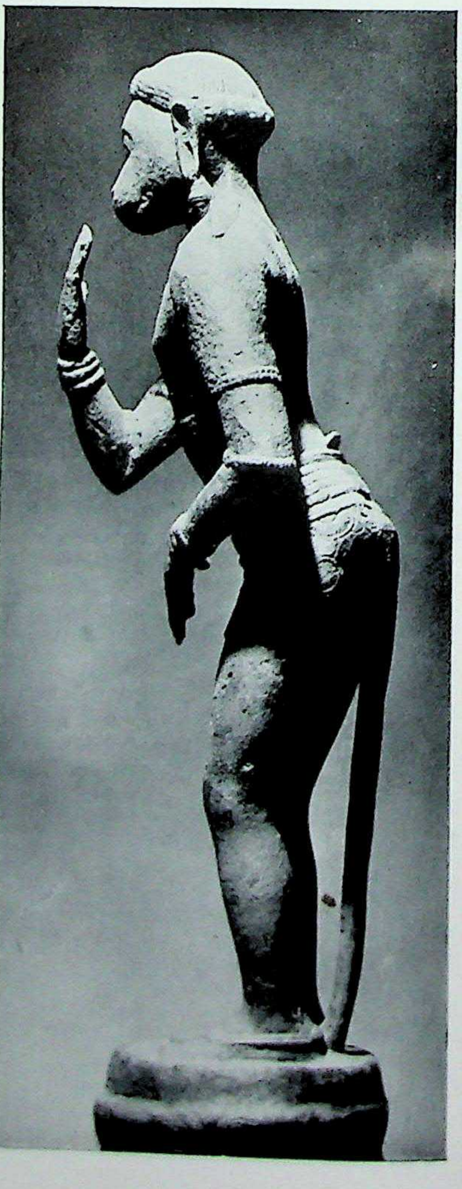
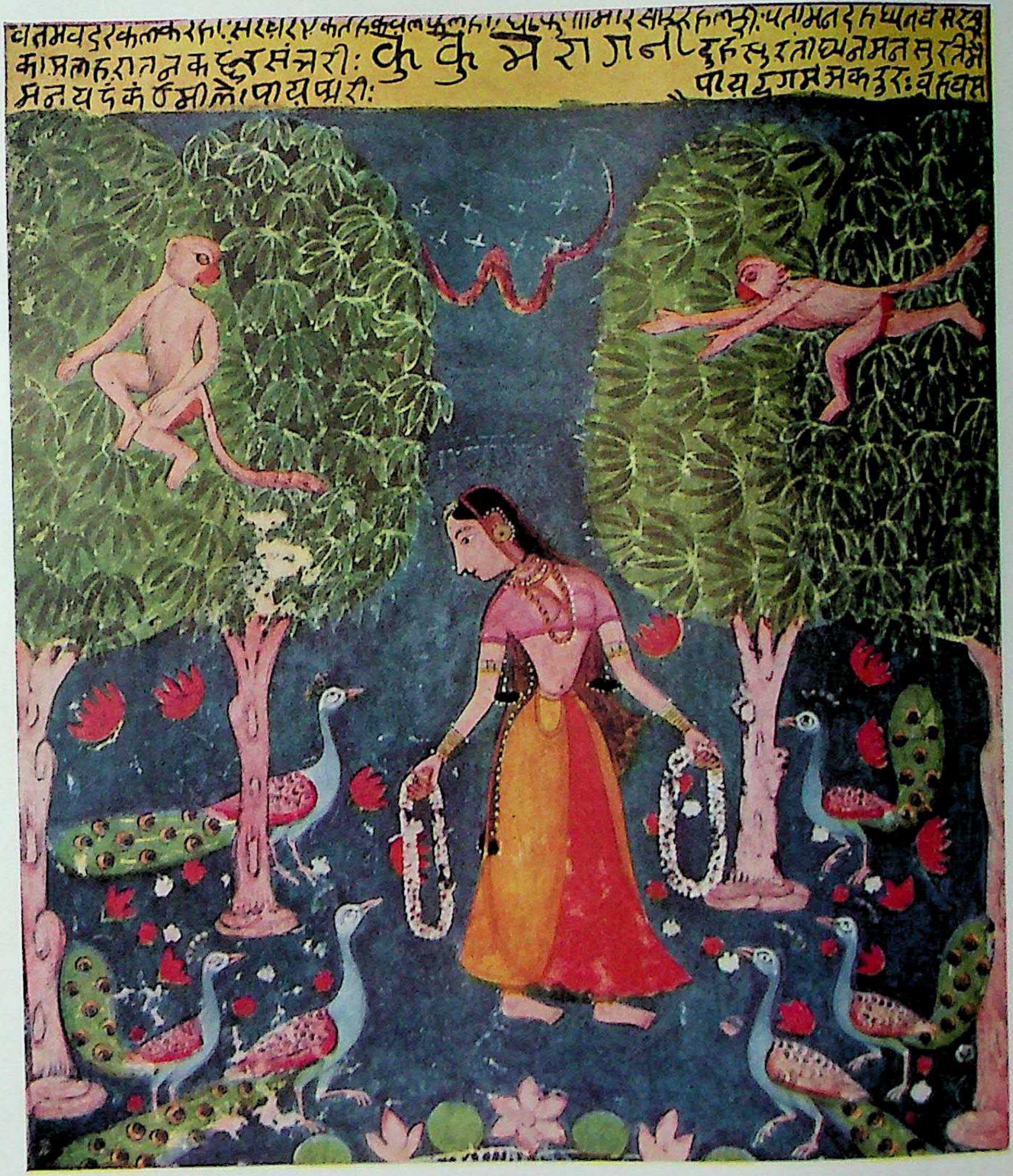


their modelling, and the sinuous and flowing lines which emerged from the treatment of drapery. "The forms of even the most austere figures," wrote the *Times* critic, "are apprehended as if by incredibly sensitive finger tips touching curved surfaces in the dark."

The later mediæval sculptures, particularly those of Bundelkhand and Orissa, tempted comparisons with the European 'baroque' style. Most people regretted not being able to see them in the context of their architectural setting, and as one of the commonest criticisms of the exhibition it was suggested that photographs of temples would have done much to make up for this.

The two least appreciated sections of the exhibition were, from the point of view of the critics, the small room devoted to the so-called Græco-Buddhist works of Gandhara, and the somewhat larger room displaying sculptures of the Hoysala school of Mysore (12th century A.D.). The former were usually dismissed as 'pastiche', while the latter were described by at least one critic as "frankly horrifying .... They have all the incoherent elaboration and the florid forms of which Indian art as a whole has sometimes been accused."

Perhaps the most widely and enthusiastically appreciated of all the sculptures were the three great bronze Natarajas. The critic of the *Scotsman* claimed that they had an astonishing force beyond anything he had seen in sculpture. "They are full of whirling movement; yet are perfectly poised. In their grace and virile power they



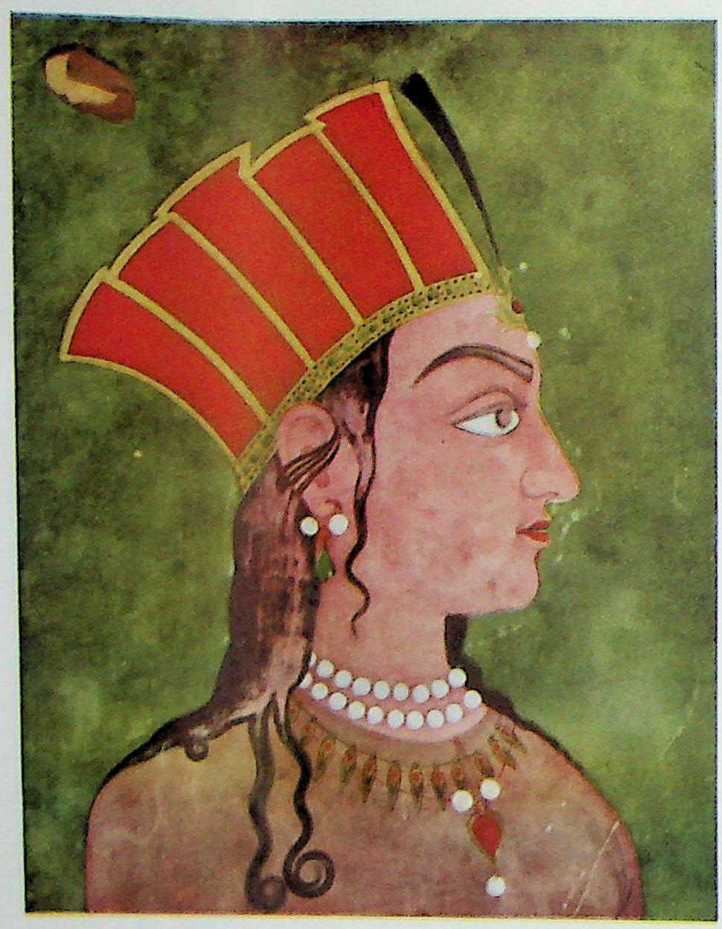
A painting on paper by Gauri Ragini Rajasthani of the late 17th century. Lent by J. C. French, England.

must count among the supreme examples of rhythmic vitality in art."

Mr. Colin MacInnes of the *Observer*, whom we have already quoted in another connection, also had some words of special praise to say of the Natarajas: "The spiritual quality of this sculpture arises from its own powerful dignity and not, apparently, from any 'ideal' imposed from without. In the Dancing Sivas this sensation of contained sensuality is expressed with astonishing force. The balance of the limbs, the swaying rhythm running through them, and the marvellous adjustment of the planes of the body to one another, reveal the artists' total grasp of the human figure and their gift for making each part of it expressive."

The various schools of miniature painting from the 15th century onwards were displayed separately from the sculpture in rooms to themselves. Here, the main interest and surprise was undoubtedly in the indigenous provincial schools, for these have hitherto been little known to the ordinary public in the West, whereas Mughal painting has been better known from the fine collections already existing in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum. Critics were struck by the wide variety of local idioms, and particularly by such relatively new discoveries as the Orissan school. Among the individual paintings which attracted particular interest were the two Orissan examples, "Gopis in an arbour" and "Maidens conversing by a stream," lent by the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta, and the rare specimens of Bijapur painting lent by the Baroda State Museum.

In the room devoted to modern Indian paintings most people gave first place either to Amrita Sher Gil or Jamini Roy. The selection as a whole revealed such an astonishing variety of styles and such great differences in standard of execution that critics found it difficult to pass any comprehensive judgments. Perhaps Mr. Eric Newton's brief comment in the *Manchester*



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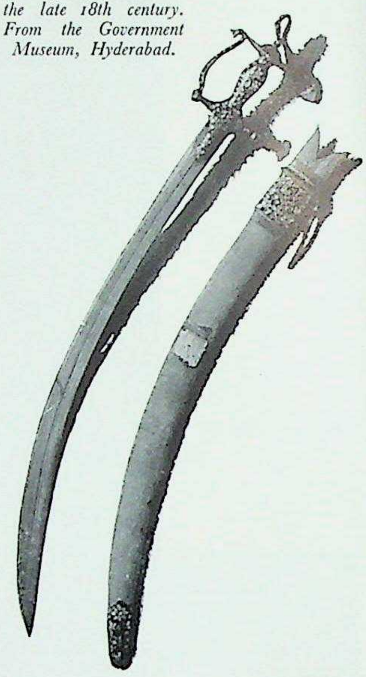
A miniature on paper of a Mughal princess, painted in mid 18th century. From the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

A gold damascened talwar and sheath, with a hilt of chiselled steel and gold, made in the late 18th century. From the Government Museum, Hyderabad.



A bull capital of an Asokan Column in highly polished sandstone from Rampurva, Bihar of the 3rd century B.C. From the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

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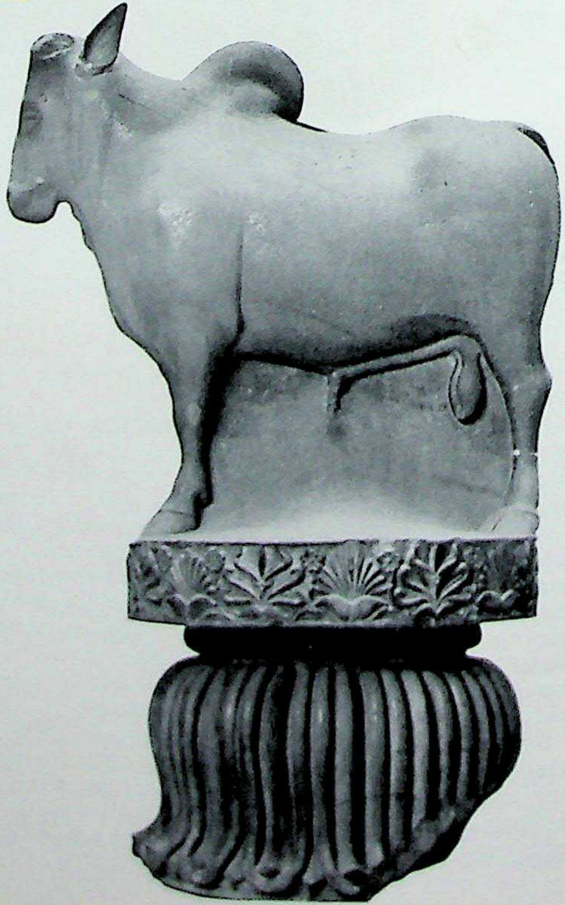

Guardian was closest to the general impression : " Here one sees the Western tradition, half-understood and half-heartedly practised, side by side with gallant attempts to revive or perpetuate the native style." The same writer singled out the works of Amrita Sher Gill for special praise, claiming that in these paintings " oriental colour and a Western vision fuse, and an authentic new flavour appears."

The Indian exhibition did not compete in popularity with the 1935 exhibition of Chinese art which was also arranged by the Royal Academy and attracted a record attendance of more than 400,000 over a slightly longer period. But Chinese art has been longer known to the West, and it has a superficial charm which can be appreciated by the ordinary Westerner even if its deeper significance is ignored. Indian art, on the other hand, is relatively new to them, and few would deny its own special difficulties from the point of view of mythology and religion. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the exhibition left a deep and lasting impression on the majority of those who saw it, and it would not be an exaggeration to claim that as a result of it, India's cultural prestige has been greatly advanced in the West.

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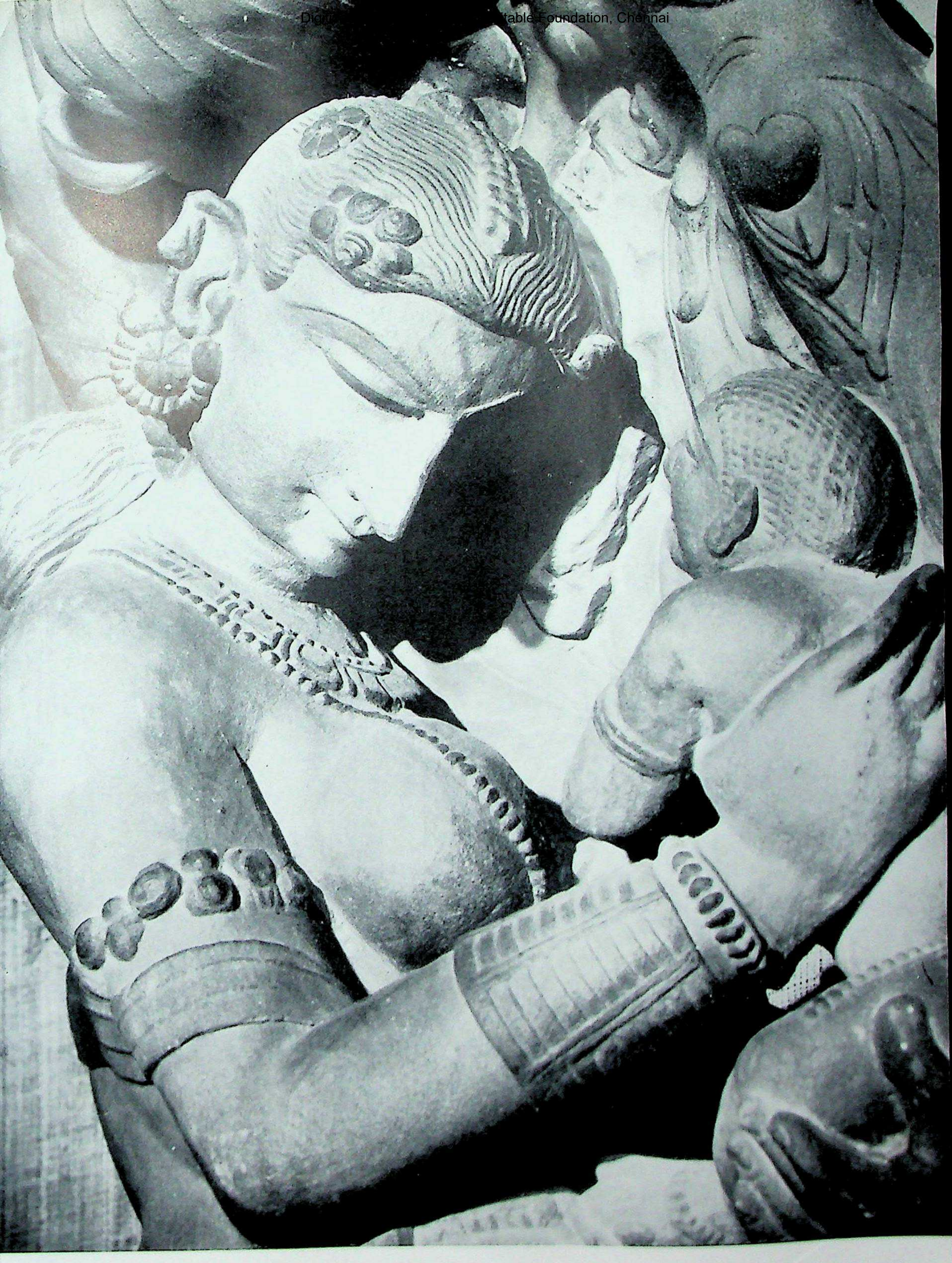

Above : Mother and child carved in sandstone, from one of the temples of Bhuvaneswar, Orissa,
showing the most graceful phase of Indo-Aryan style in the plastic art during 11th century.
Page twenty : 'Rose' a study, by Dr. S. B. Cooper.
Page twenty-one : A candid shot, by Margaret Bourke-White (by courtesy of Life magazine.)
Page twenty-two : 'Mischief', by M. S. Master.

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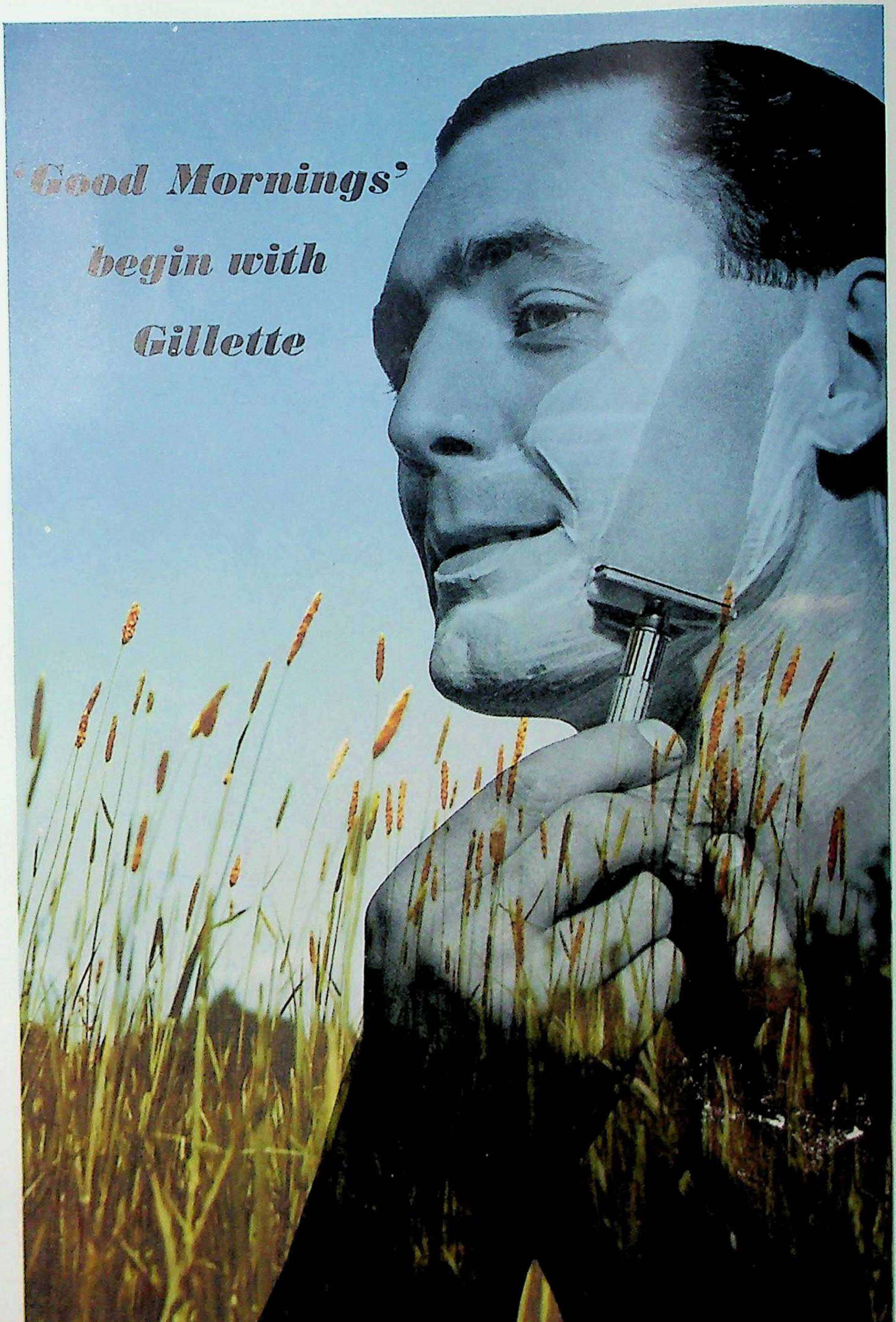
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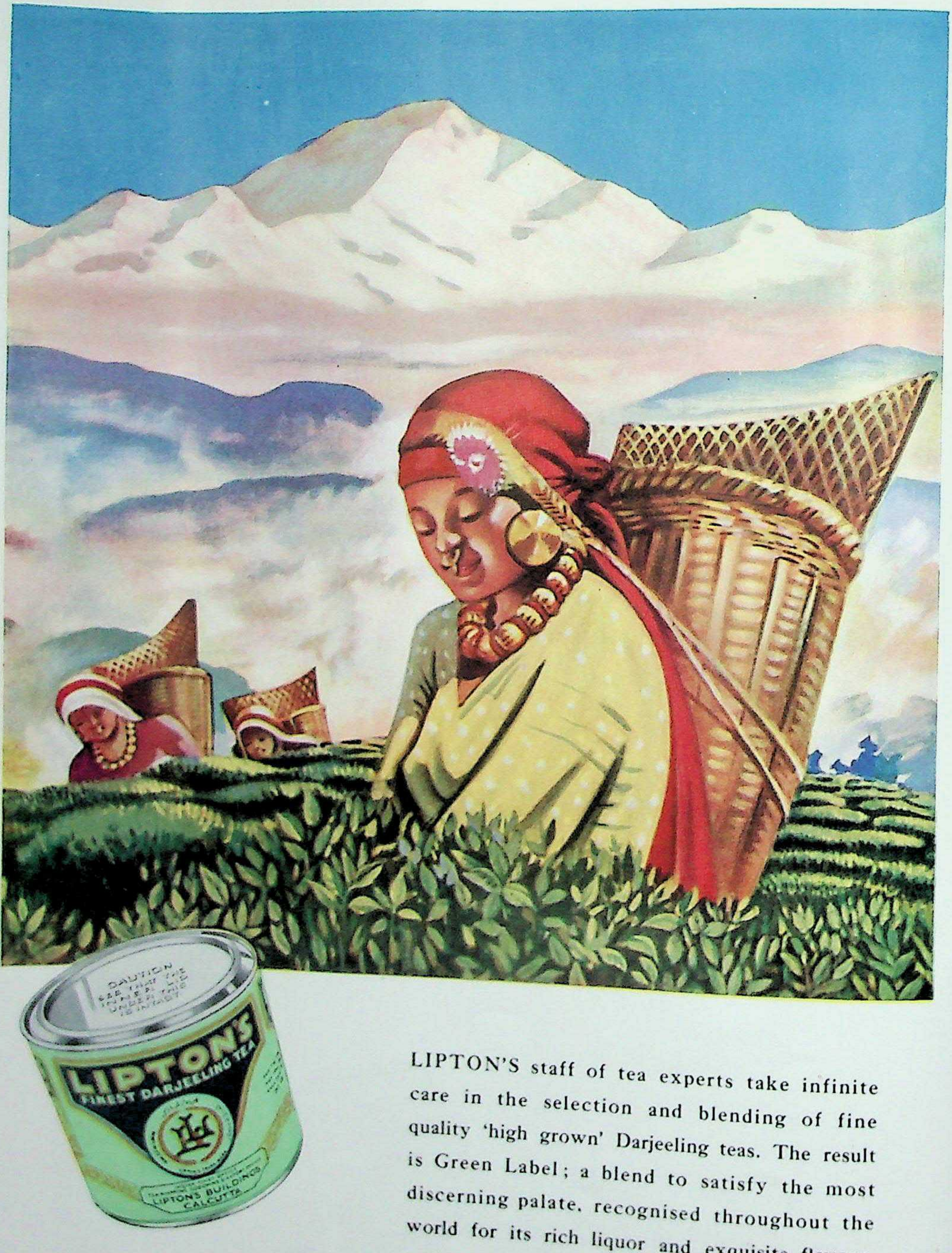
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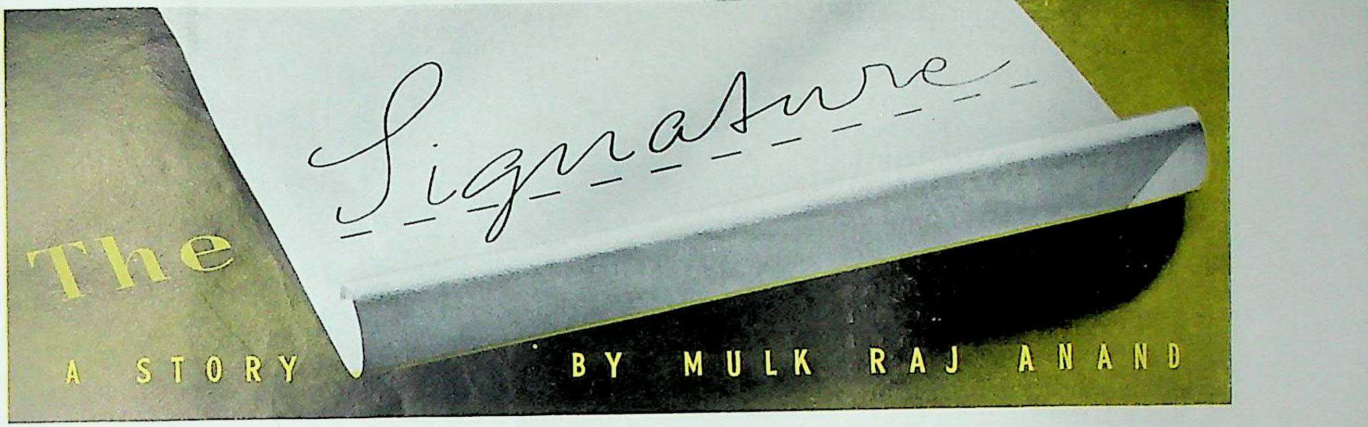


The Signature

A STORY BY MULK RAJ ANAND

THERE is something sacred about a signature: it makes everything valid, puts the seal upon all undertakings, makes bonds real, guarantees securities, cements pacts of friendship and alliance between states, provides the ultimate proofs of integrity in the highest courts of law—the signature is all in all. Even poets when they publish new poems often call them New Signatures. And the radio uses a signature tune as its patent or hall-mark. But especially do Banks honour the signature: certainly they will not honour anything which does not bear a signature: to them the signature is almost omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, supreme!

Now, though everyone who draws a cheque knows the importance of the signature to the Bank, through bitter experience of cheques coming back with the usual slip if they do not bear the signature, or if the signature is slightly wonky or blurred, there are still two kinds of people who have not yet realised the value of the signature. These are respectively some of the feudal gentry, who live in the 'Indian India' or the Mofussil or on large estates in the country, and the very poor, who have no Bank accounts to their credit at all.

Of course, it may be said in extenuation of the last class of people that the reason why they dishonour the signature is because they have been left illiterate. For they do make every attempt to come to scratch when a document is presented to them by putting their thumbs forward for the blacking and imprint the very image of their soul, the mark of that stumpy, reliable finger on to the page, thus honouring the unwritten convention that a mark of some kind is necessary in order to prove a person's integrity. But the conspicuous disregard of this convention by the former class of people, the feudal gentry, is rather surprising to say the least and betokens an attitude which though rather charming causes serious difficulties, particularly to the business of Banking—so the Bankers say.

As the Banks, nowadays, are trying very hard to interest the feudal gentry to convert their gold into cash and let it flow, so that money should not remain buried in the earth in the classic tradition of our country and make a Midas of every grandee, but as the nobility are incorrigibly lazy in appreciating the values of modernity, there is a polite war going on between the nobility of the old world and the nobility of the new order.

Perhaps one cannot call the tension that prevails between these brothers a polite war so much as a war of politeness, for there is no ill will in this struggle, or hatred or even contempt; there is only a certain impatience or irritation which is so often followed by laughter that it is more of amusement than disdain.

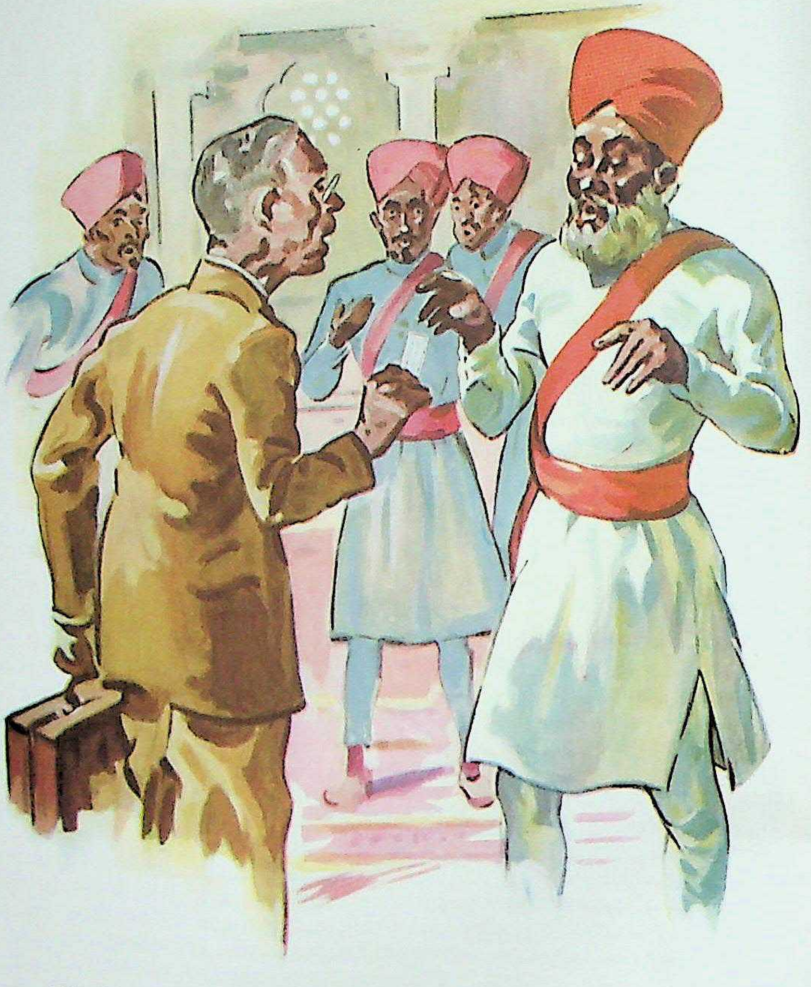
One of the most amusing illustrations of this little war was provided the other day by the goings on between Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Bahadur, nobleman and dignitary of Aliabad State, a Director of the India and Commonwealth Bank Ltd. and Mr. C. Subramaniam, Assistant Manager of this Bank.

The India and Commonwealth Bank Ltd. is a small but steady Bank founded about ten years ago, and which, with the coming of freedom, has been seeking to increase its business to contribute something to the making of the new India. In pursuance of this very laudable desire, they had recently promised a big loan, on good interest, to a new Optical industry which was being set up by an enterprising young entrepreneur, against the most unquestionably sound guarantees. The papers were ready and had been duly signed by all the Directors save Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Bahadur. That was the situation and there was nothing very complicated or controversial about it. But Nawab Luqman Ali Khan, who had been sent the papers several weeks ago, had just not taken the trouble to sign them and return them. Meanwhile, the enterprising entrepreneur felt that the people of India were fast going blind for want of good eye-glasses, and the Bank's normal business was held up.

The Manager of the Bank, Mr. Hormusji Pestonji Bankwala, wrote many letters reminding the Nawab Sahib Bahadur about his signature on the documents, but there was no reply.

As on all those occasions, when there is no answer to a letter, people begin to worry and postulate the most extraordinary fears and establish the strangest hypotheses, Mr. Bankwala began to think all kinds of things and got into a panic. The documents may have been looted on the way to Aliabad, he felt, for quite a few trains had been held up by armed gangs recently and ransacked, or the Nawab may have fallen a prey to a stray bullet in a riot, or he may have gone away to Pakistan. Anything was possible. As he waited day after day, the whole business became very nerve wracking for the other Directors might soon

All the characters in this story are fictitious.



'Mr. Subramaniam produced his card and asked to see the Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Sahib.'

get to know that this loan was still pending and might feel he was inefficient.

So, after much worrying, he thought of a desperate stratagem: he would send the Assistant Manager, Mr. Subramaniam, to see Nawab Luqman Ali Khan at Aliabad and to get his signature on all the documents. Subramaniam had won his way to Assistant Managership of the Bank by dint of his command of figures as well as fingers and with a certain sullen efficiency which, though not exactly American, was typical of the new Indian pioneers. Therefore, Mr. Bankwala sent Mr. Subramaniam to Aliabad, not by rail, as that was not quick enough now after the Nawab's delays, but by air.

To the hard working Subramaniam, who had, during twenty years' grind, got into a certain exact and unvaried relationship with the office table and chair, this air trip was an extraordinary adventure and not altogether pleasant. For one thing he was told by friends that it would be very cold in the air, and he went to the Air-Line office loaded with a holdall full of blankets which made his luggage so heavy that he had to pay excess from his own pocket. Then, his digestion, trained on *sambhar* and *rassam*, revolted at the very first bite on the biscuits served by the air-hostess, and he felt and looked like a shrivelled-up porcupine all the way. A further affliction was that at the midway station where breakfast was served he had to eat with implements other than those with which he had been used to eat in his orthodox life before. And he made a fool of himself in the eyes of a couple of Indian dandies who were meticulous with their knives and forks and snobbishly contemptuous of those who were not so adroit. And when at last, he alighted from the bus at the Air-Line office in the main street of Aliabad, he found himself in an incredibly native atmosphere where everyone was dressed in flowing Indian robes and he felt like a monkey in his badly tailored suit.

He tried to look for a taxi, but though some Buicks glided by, there was no motor vehicle available for hire. Perforce, he had to mount on to a strange horse carriage called an ekka, from which his legs dangled like the legs of a scare-crow being transported to the fields. All he could see being sold in the shops were colourful bangles and velvet shoes and pan biri, and Subramaniam, who had gone half-way to modernity, thought that he had come to the backwoods and felt very depressed about it all, added to which was the usual panic at going to a strange place.

When he got to Zeenat Mahal, the palace of the Nawab Sahib Bahadur, he was further confused. For all the servants sitting around the hubble-bubble in the hall gave him the once over, cocked their eyes at each other and remained immobile. Apparently they had been trained only to bow and scrape to the other noblemen of Aliabad, and a mere Madrasi, with pince nez, arriving in an ekka was not *persona grata*.

Mr. Subramaniam produced his card and asked to see the Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Sahib.

This time it was the servants and retainers who were confused, for no one had, within living memory, produced a white ticket of that kind with the request that it be transported to the Nawab Sahib.

The Jemadar took it with gingerly fingers ; and as Mr. Subramaniam added a staccato phrase in Angrezi speech, this dignatory ran towards the inner sanctum like a lame duck. Meanwhile, the other servants dispersed like wizened cocks fluttering away from the rubbish heap at the approach of a human being.

Mr. Subramaniam began to settle with the ekka driver who, unlike the Bombay ghariwallahs, immediately accepted what he was given, salaamed and went off.

The Jemadar emerged after protracted confabulations inside the sanctum of the palace and led Mr. Subramaniam towards a little guest house beyond the garden in the courtyard of the palace.

Mr. Subramaniam waited for a word of explanation which would provide the clue to what was happening to him, but the Jemadar was silent, only being most polite and accommodating, bowing and salaaming now in a manner that seemed more than obsequious. And then he left Mr. Subramaniam with the words :

'Please rest and wait.'

Mr. Subramaniam took off his jacket and his shoes and lay back in the arm chair in the verandah. In a little while a servant came and apprised him of the fact that the bath was ready. This made Mr. Subramaniam feel that things were moving after all. But when he had finished his bath, changed into a new suit and come to rest in the arm chair with a tea tray in front of him, nothing happened again, except the passage of time on his wrist watch, and he began to feel anxious. The laws of politeness in a Muhammadan household did not permit him to probe into any corner even of the garden, lest there should be someone in purdah whose chastity might be outraged by the glance of a stranger's eye. The servants seemed to have all disappeared too, and Mr. Subramaniam's hold on Hindustani speech was too precarious to permit him to shout and call the Jemadar.

As the afternoon advanced towards the evening, Mr. Subramaniam's anxiety became a little more akin to irritation. And he began to pace up and down the verandah almost as though he was a prisoner of time. But this parade was not of much avail, and after he had walked to and fro for a quarter of an hour he sat down again and began to write a letter to the Nawab Sahib.

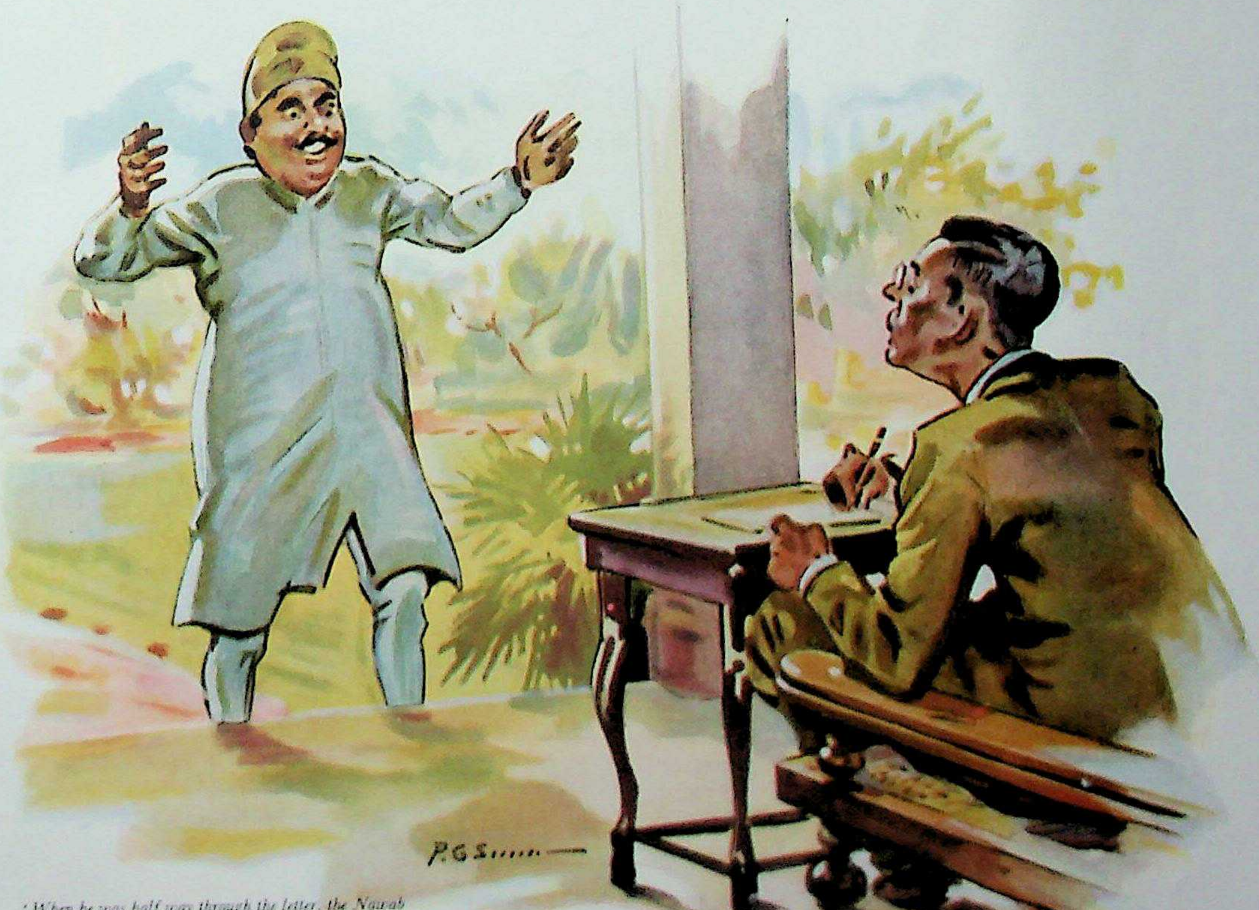
When he was half way through the letter, the Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Sahib appeared; a jolly, rotund figure, dressed in a spotless white silk achkhan, tight trousers and a strange Aliabad-style round turban with no parting in front. He was the very soul of affability, charm, grace and good humour, for he greeted Mr. Subramaniam almost as though the Assistant Bank Manager was a long lost friend.

'I hope you had a nice journey. And have my servants been looking after you?......Of course, you can't expect the comforts of such a modern city as Bombay in my humble abode....But we have a few modern places, you know....For instance, there is the Aliabad Club. I am just going there and you must come and meet my friends——'

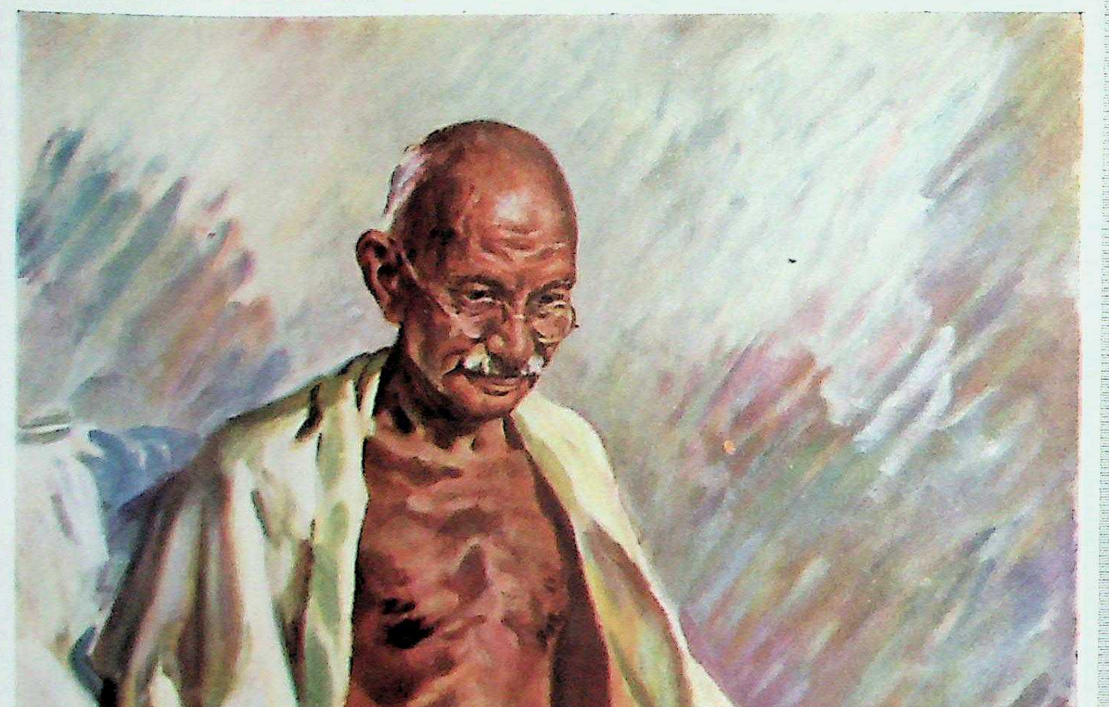
'Sir, I would like to discuss those papers with you', Mr. Subramaniam interrupted. 'You see, Sir, I have specially come to get your signature....'

'Oh come, come, my dear fellow, you take work too seriously. After all you have just arrived and you must see a bit of life. To be sure, we are not as advanced as you in Bombay, but....And we shall see about business matters tomorrow morning. After all it doesn't take long to put my signature on a paper.... Come, don't worry. I want you particularly to meet Nawab Haider Ali, the Home Minister, and Nawab

(Please turn to page 85)



'When he was half way through the letter, the Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Sahib appeared ....'

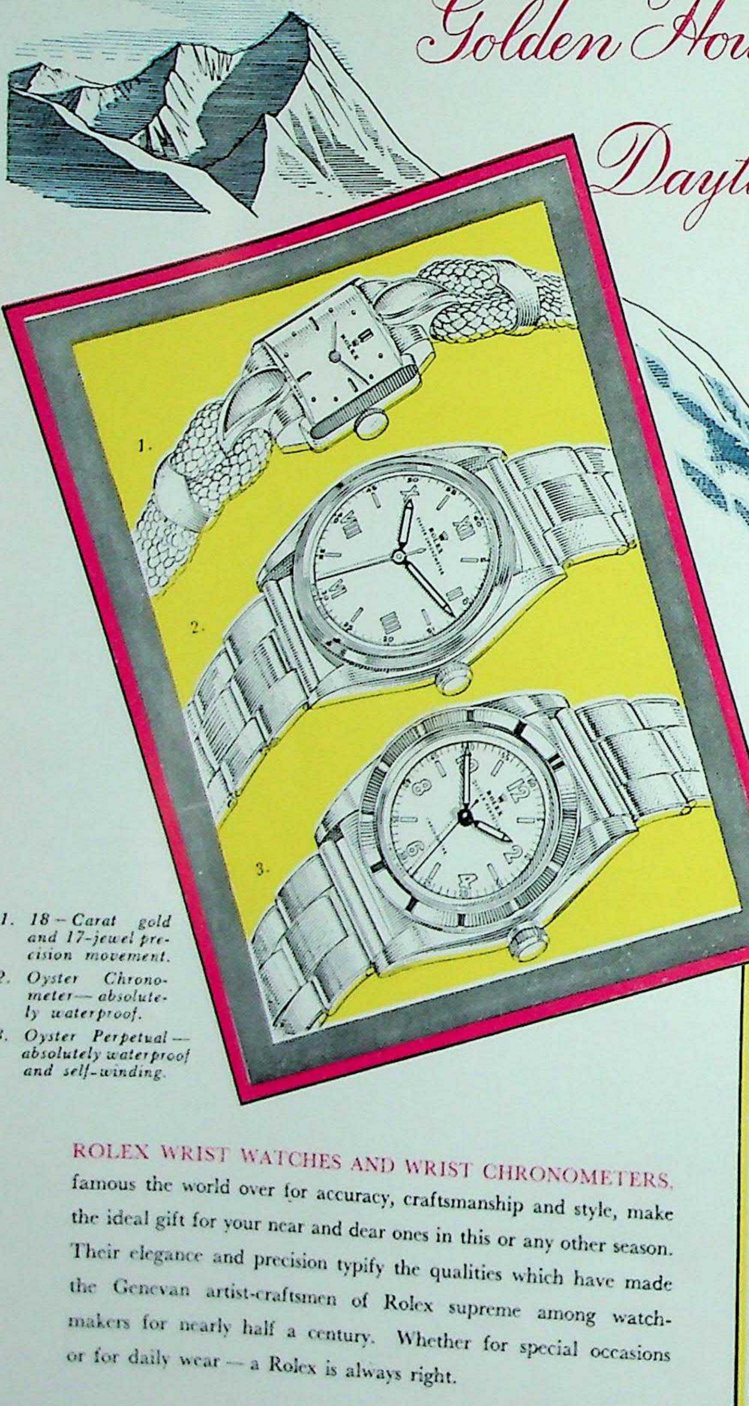


INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man and just as a man will not grow horns or a tail so he will not exist as man if he has no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own.

mkGandhi

Golden Hours for Daytime, Night-time, Lifetime



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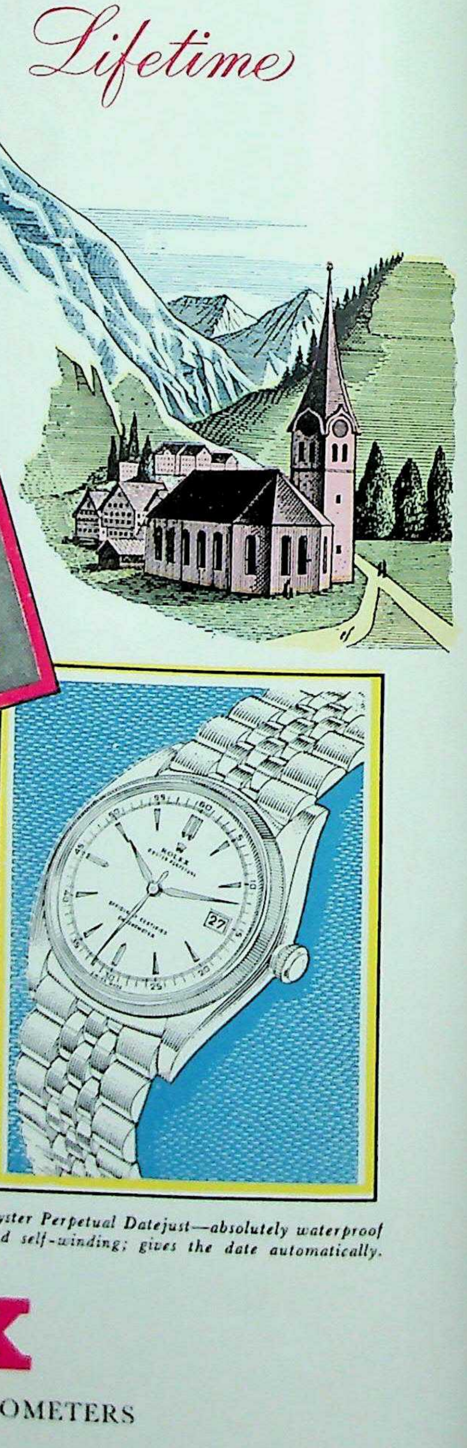

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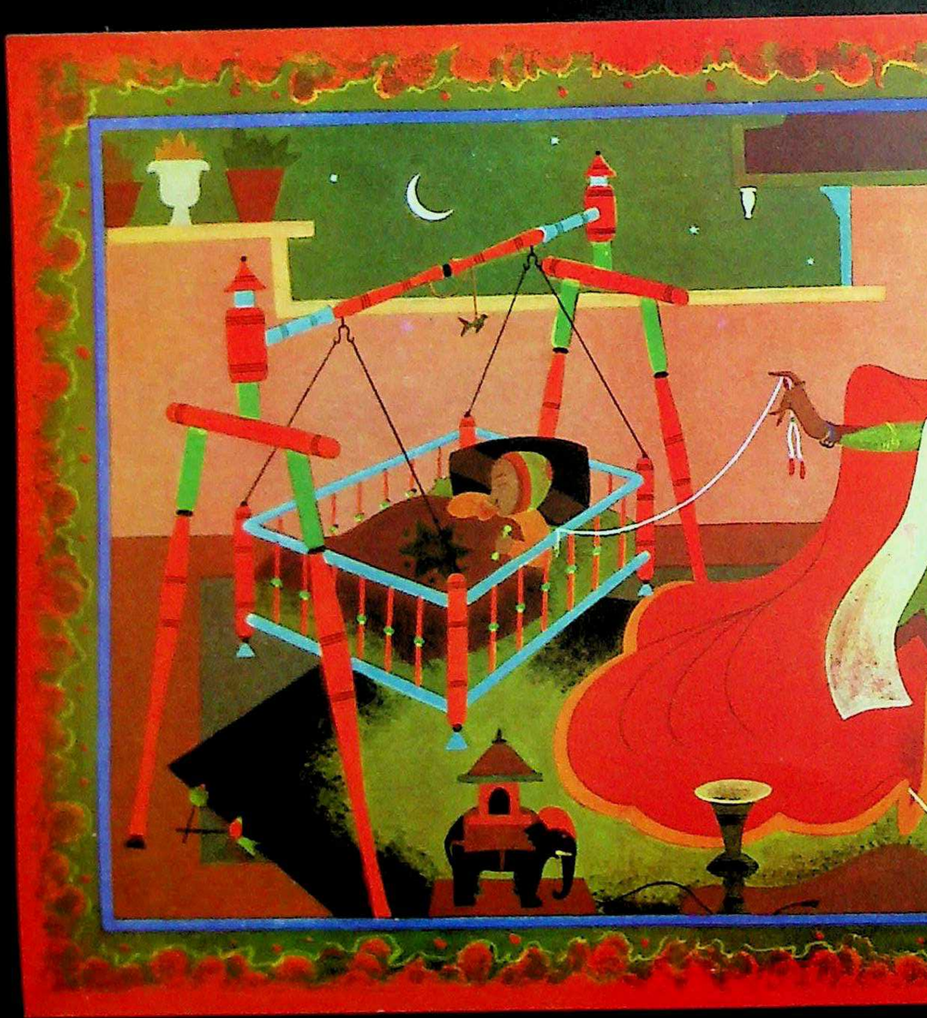

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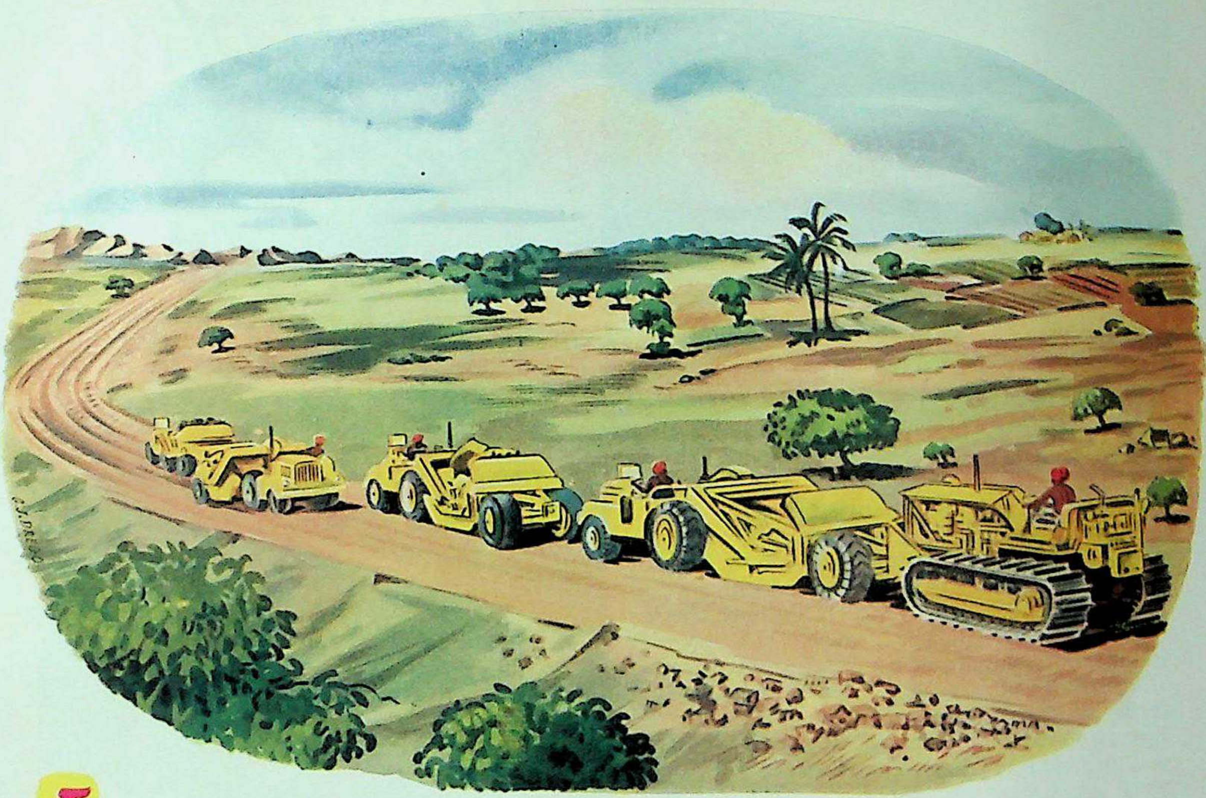

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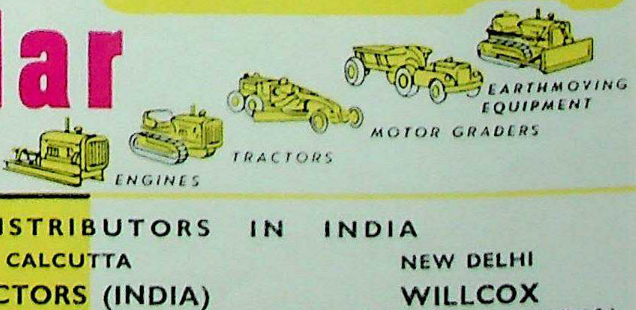

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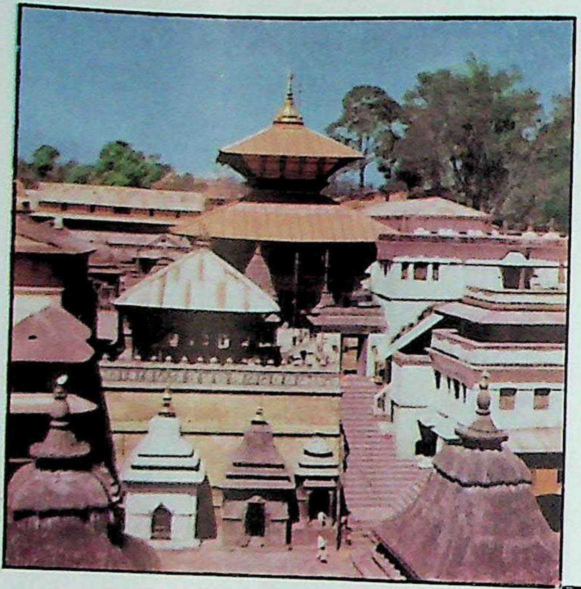
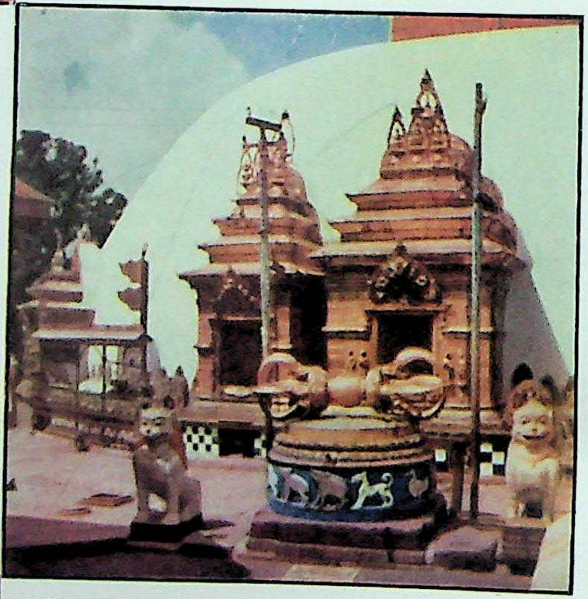


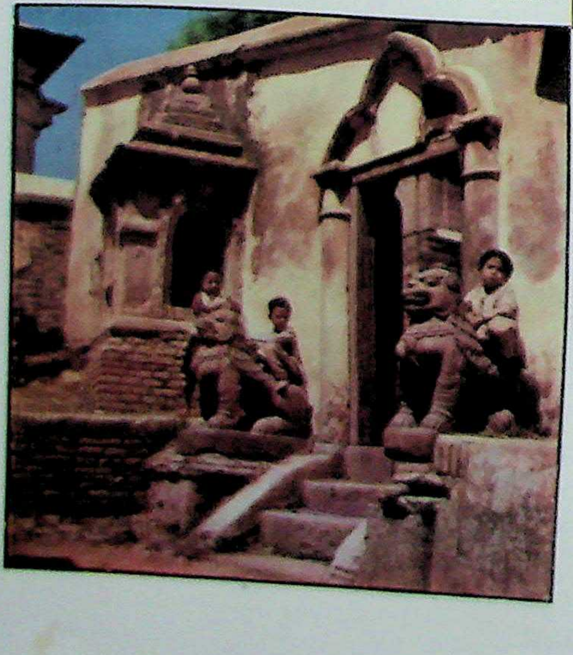
Temples in Nepal

Photographed by G. C. Dorsett

NEPAL might well be called 'the land of temples', and the visitor on his way from India has this first impression from the top of the Chandragiri Pass when, suddenly at a turn in the steep track, there 2,000 feet below he catches his first breath-taking glimpse of the Nepal Valley with its little towns and myriads of golden-roofed temples all twinkling in the sunshine. Later, when walking through dirty narrow streets, his thought is confirmed by continually coming upon these beautifully carven and coloured buildings—jewels in drab settings.

▲ *A picturesque collection of temples at Pashpatti, north-east of Khatmandu, with the holiest of all the Nepal Hindu temples in the centre. This is a handsome building in the pagoda style with a brazen gilt roof and large richly carved silver gates standing on the bank of the River Bagmati. Many Hindus come on their last pilgrimage to die on the steps of the ghat with their feet lapped by the sacred waters, and the temple is of such great sanctity that no non-Hindu is allowed within the walls.*



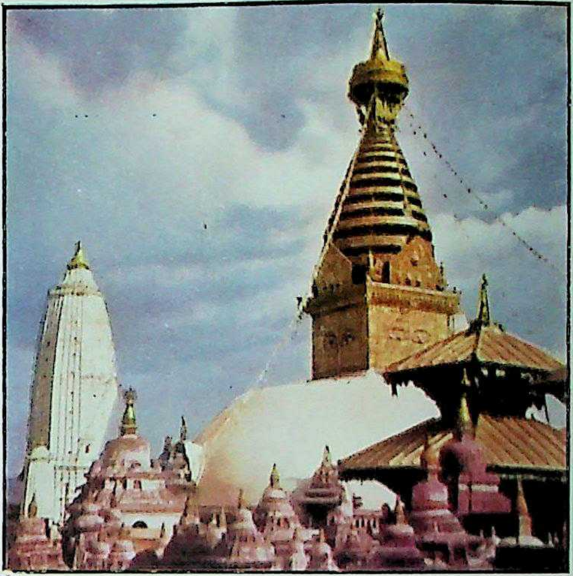


The large 'vajra' or 'Thunderbolt of Indra' which stands at the entrance to the Temple of Sambhunath. Buddhists regard the 'vajra' as the sacred symbol of their divine master's power in the same way as Christians observe the Cross, and their scriptures say that a contest once occurred between Buddha and Indra, the Hindu God of the firmament, during which the latter was defeated and lost to the victor his weapon, a thunderbolt, which was taken as a trophy. There are many of these monuments in Nepal, supposed by the local inhabitants to be wrought of solid gold. This particular one is mounted on a stone lotus throne with twelve animals, said to depict the twelve months of the Tibetan year, carven around it. ▲

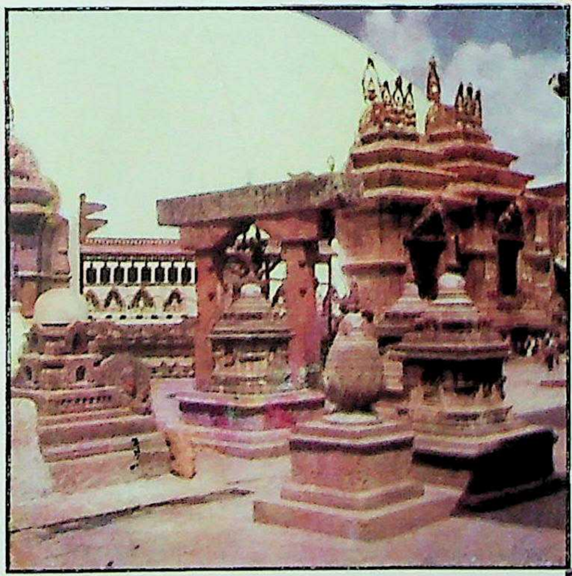
Children who live near the Pashpatti temple find the stone 'singhas' at one of the entrances big playthings and good seats from which to watch the photographer. ◀

It is recorded that Buddha who spent most of his life close by in Nepal Terai, visited the valley in the 5th century B.C. and found a people whose religion was Hindu, strictly administered by Brahman priests. He visited most of the holy places and when he left had made a thousand

A general view of Sambhunath temple, which stands at the top of a wooded hill overlooking Khatmandu. The approach to the temple from the valley below is by a broad flight of six hundred stone steps, which, nearing the temple, become very steep. At the foot of the stairs stands a colossal image of Buddha. The temple has a lofty conical spire divided into thirteen segments of copper gilt, and on each of the four sides of the base are painted in crimson, white and black the 'Eyes of Buddha.' Guarding this majestic temple are huge gilt dragons and all around are numerous other smaller temples and shrines; mainly Hindu. It is a wonderful monument, full of colour and beautiful carving. ▶

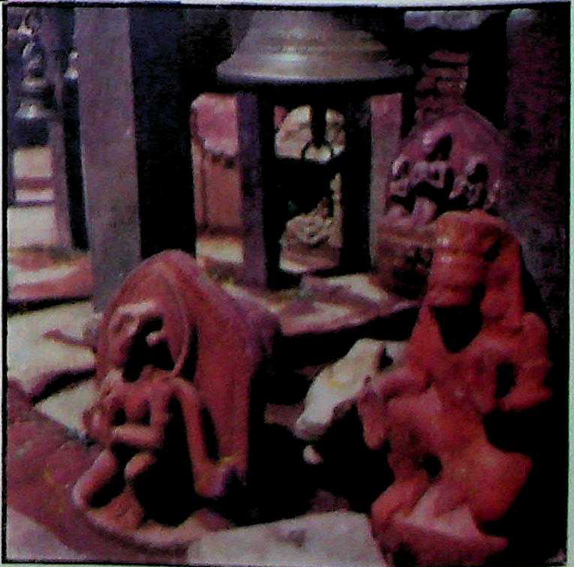


▼ *Another view of the Temple of Sambhunath showing some of the many memorials upon which are recorded the dates when it has been repaired and the names of persons by whom the repairs were effected. The white mound or 'garbh' is typical of this type of Buddhist Temple in Nepal and is its most essential and characteristic feature. It is a massive dome of solid earth and brick built on a basement or plinth, and right in the centre is usually a chamber, permanently sealed when the mound was built, and containing religious relics.*

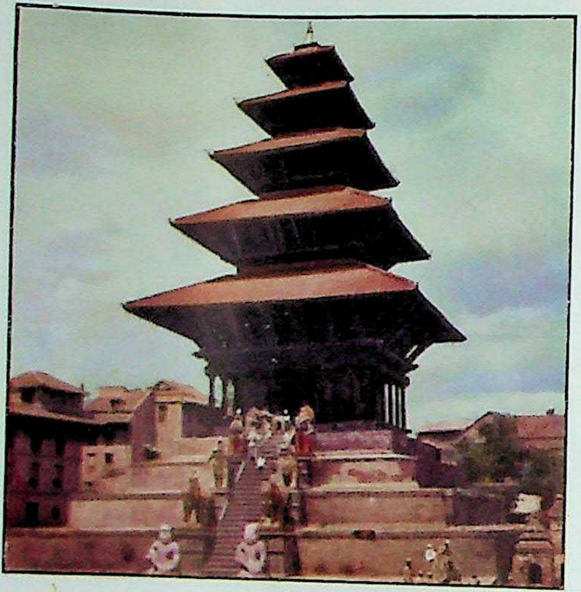


The Newars who are the original race of Nepal and still by far the largest section of the inhabitants are mainly carpenters, masons and metal workers, and it is to them that the temples and buildings owe their rich and prolific carvings and statues, which vary from small figures of infinite craftsmanship to life-size images. Over the years they have developed great art, which is expressed mainly in religious sentiment showing their whole-hearted, deep faith and confidence in their religion. It is symbolic and there is no unmeaning ornament put on just for embellishment.

▼ *These stone figures of Garuda and Hanuman with the old bell stand at the entrance to the tank where Vishnu lies on his bed of snakes at Nilakanta. There is a legend which says that the God once drank poisoned water and this gave him a thirst so great that in his agony he went to the Himalayan snows and by striking the mountainside with his trident produced three streams of water, which collected into a lake and was called Nila-Kent or 'blue neck', from the discolouration caused by the poison. Devotees have built two smaller representations of the lake surrounded by the most beautiful terraced gardens.*

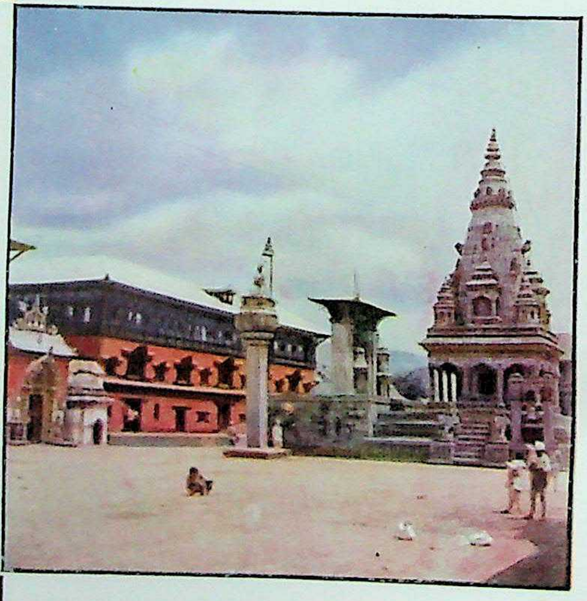


converts who subsequently spread his teachings. For several centuries the battle between Buddhism and Brahminism went on until King Asoka, who in the 1st century visited Nepal with his daughter, proclaimed Buddhism a national religion and built the city of Patan with a big temple right in the centre, to commemorate the occasion. From this time the two religions continued together until today they are so closely related as to be almost a single and separate religion.

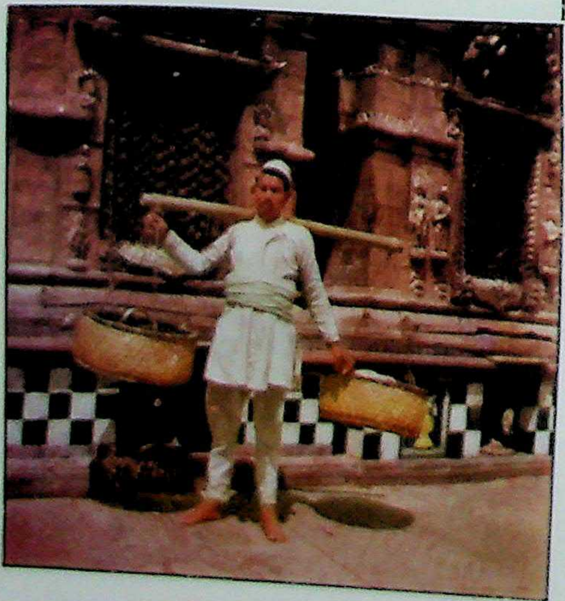


Nyatpola Deval, or the Temple of the Five Stages, stands on five terraces penetrated by a flight of enormous steps in a small square off the Durbar Square in Bhatgaon. Huge figures carved in stone and painted in brilliant colours stand on each side of the stairway. On the lowest step are two wrestlers, who were historical giants and reputed to have the strength of ten men. Above them are two elephants, then two lions with two griffins next and on the top step two deities, Singhini and Vyaghini, the most powerful of all. They are known as the 'Terribles' and are supposedly enemies of evil. The temple itself is an imposing building and was built in 1780. It is said that the ruler at this time, by himself carrying three bricks and setting an example so inspired the citizens of Bhatgaon that within five days all materials for its construction were brought to the site.

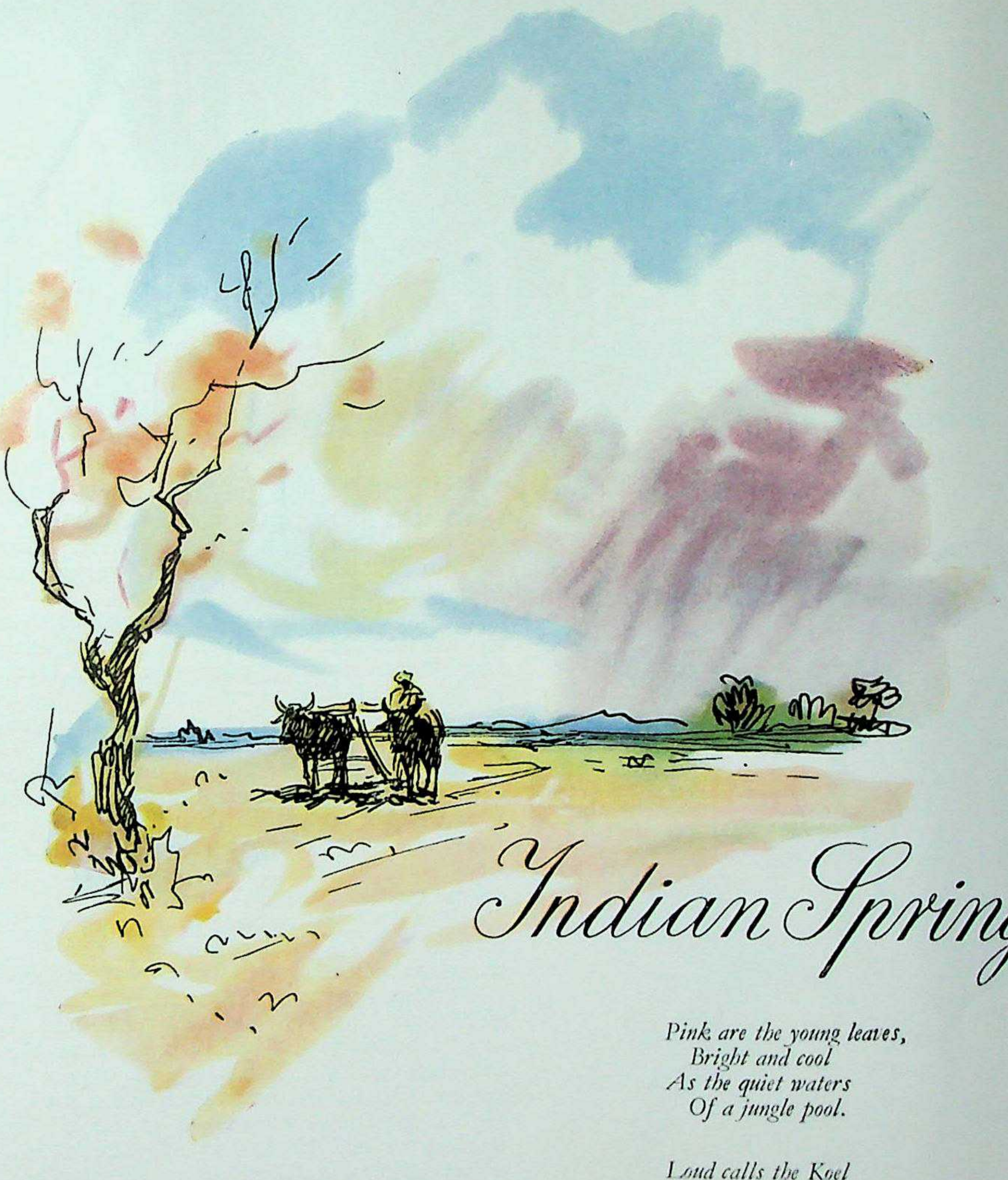
▶ *The Durbar Square in Bhatgaon, the 'Golden City,' rich in glorious architecture is a rambling space of flagged pavement packed tightly with a score of temples rising tier on tier in a confusion of golden roofs all reflecting the bright sun. In the centre is a huge bell hanging in a granite arch and towering above this Rajah Bhupatendra Mall, the greatest of Bhatgaon's rulers, kneels overlooking the Durbar Hall built during his reign 200 years ago. This fine building with its wonderful copper gilt door and confusion of skilful woodcarving and metal work is a tribute to the patient handicraft of the old Newars.*



A typical street vendor of Nepal standing before the Sambhunath temple. His dress is the common one for most of the people and in winter it is padded with cotton or fur to keep out the cold. Women wear a sari worn in the Indian style with a profusion of ornaments. Behind the Nepali are two of the five shrines built at each of the four cardinal points around the base of the mound of the temple. They are covered in copper gilt and each contains a large image of Buddha in gilt. The entrance to each shrine is closed by an iron chain curtain which is there to protect the statue within. ▼



All the Buddhist temples in Nepal are built on the same pattern with a large mound or 'garbh', the top of which is flattened a little to take the spire. On four sides of the brick base of the spire are always painted the oblique, half-closed, benevolent and baleful 'Eyes of Buddha' which as sources of light, are regarded as all-seeing and follow his devotees wherever they go and see them in whatever they do. Near the main entrance to most of the temples is hung a large bell which is rung by the priests at daybreak and dusk and by visitors coming to pray, to scare away evil spirits.



Indian Spring

Pink are the young leaves,
Bright and cool
As the quiet waters
Of a jungle pool.

Loud calls the Koel
From the tree.
At dawn and in the sun-light
And at dusk calls he.

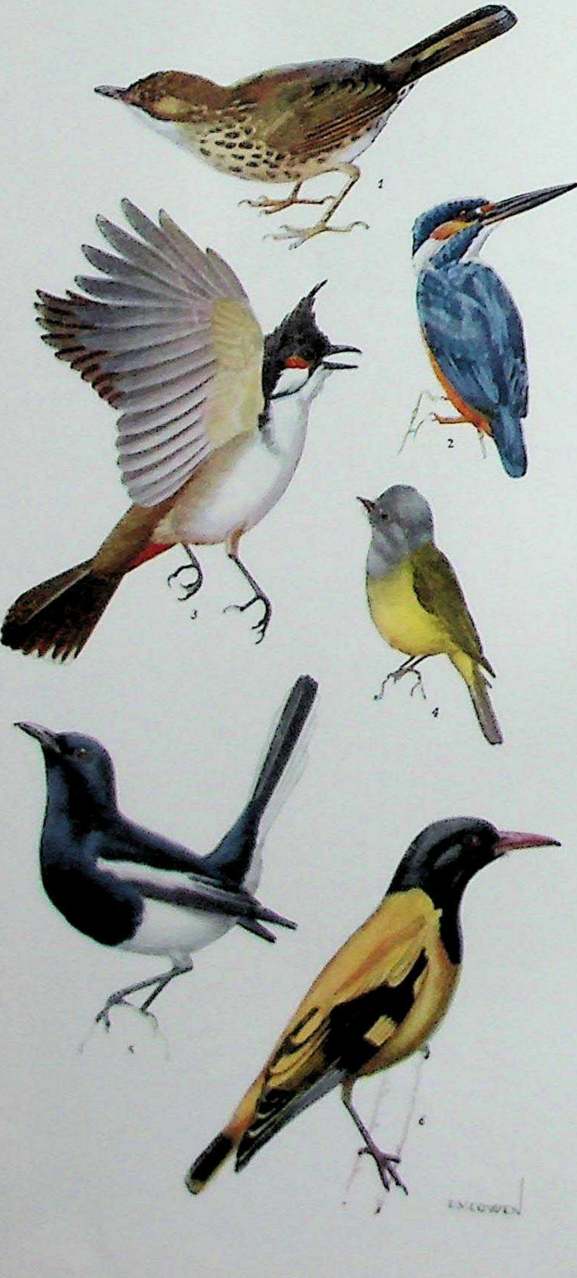
Peasants plough slowly
Earth's parched crust,
Tilling the soil
Ere green blades thrust.

Rain cascades earthwards,
Wild winds sing.
Bold and fierce yet lovely
Is the Indian Spring.

JEAN HUGHES

The Birds of an Assamese Tea Garden

BY JEAN HUGHES



BIRDS. Myriads of them. Fluting calls and whirr of wings from daybreak to nightfall. How that great bird lover, Earl Grey of Falloden, would have enjoyed the birds of an Indian tea garden.

Even the most ignorant, one who does not know the difference between a vulture and a flycatcher, can take pleasure in the golden glow of a black-headed oriole as it idles its way among the dark green leaves of a mango tree; or in the shimmering streak of a kingfisher speeding up the nullah; or the fiery flash of the scarlet minivet. But for the real bird-lover, the quiet observer, the photographer, the keen ornithologist, what fields of exploration lie spread before them here. We need a Peter Scott, or a Cherry Kearton, to show the world something of the lovely birds that flourish in and around the tea gardens of Assam.

The joy begins at break of day. As I lie drowsily abed in that delightful ten minutes that follows the arrival of the morning tea, I can hear a variety of bird calls.

"Three cheers! Three cheers!" shrieks the small spotted babbler over and over again.

"I believe you, I believe you," flutes the white-whiskered bulbul. Somewhere a magpie robin is singing. He is the best songster in the flower garden, and as fiercefully resentful of trespassers upon his territory as any English robin. The sparrows and mynas chirrup ceaselessly from the thatched eaves, while the spotted dove croons from a sunlit spray of the bamboo clump. Already the small grey-headed flycatcher with its canary yellow waistcoat, a winter visitor, twitters a soft little ditty between its aerial sorties after insects from a bough of the great rubber tree (*Ficus Elastica*).

That the thoughts of the spotted owlets have turned to dreams of nest-making I can tell by the gurgling love-call, that long after the sun has risen, still sounds from the depths of the mango tree.

Incidentally, the antics of a pair of jungle owlets that one year set their hearts upon nesting beneath our roof are among my most amusing bird memories. They had particular designs upon my bathroom, but almost any room in the bungalow would have suited them. Eventually every window had to be shut for several days in order to discourage them, while they sat around outside in broad sunlight—she coyly dejected—he

1. Spotted babbler. 2. Common kingfisher. 3. Red-whiskered bulbul. 4. Grey-headed flycatcher. 5. Magpie robin (male). 6. Black-headed oriole.

frankly defiant. Much as I love birds I could not look forward to the prospect of sharing our roof with them. In the end they chose a hole in a *gul mohur* tree by the garage, an infinitely suitable site from a human point of view. But I must admit that I suffered several penitent qualms when I saw the hen owlet being tormented by inquisitive jungle crows, who *would* peep in upon her privacy when she was quietly hatching her eggs. Or had they more sinister designs? At any rate, every now and again the owlet would pop out upon them with a fierce discordant shriek that sent the intruders flying about their own business.

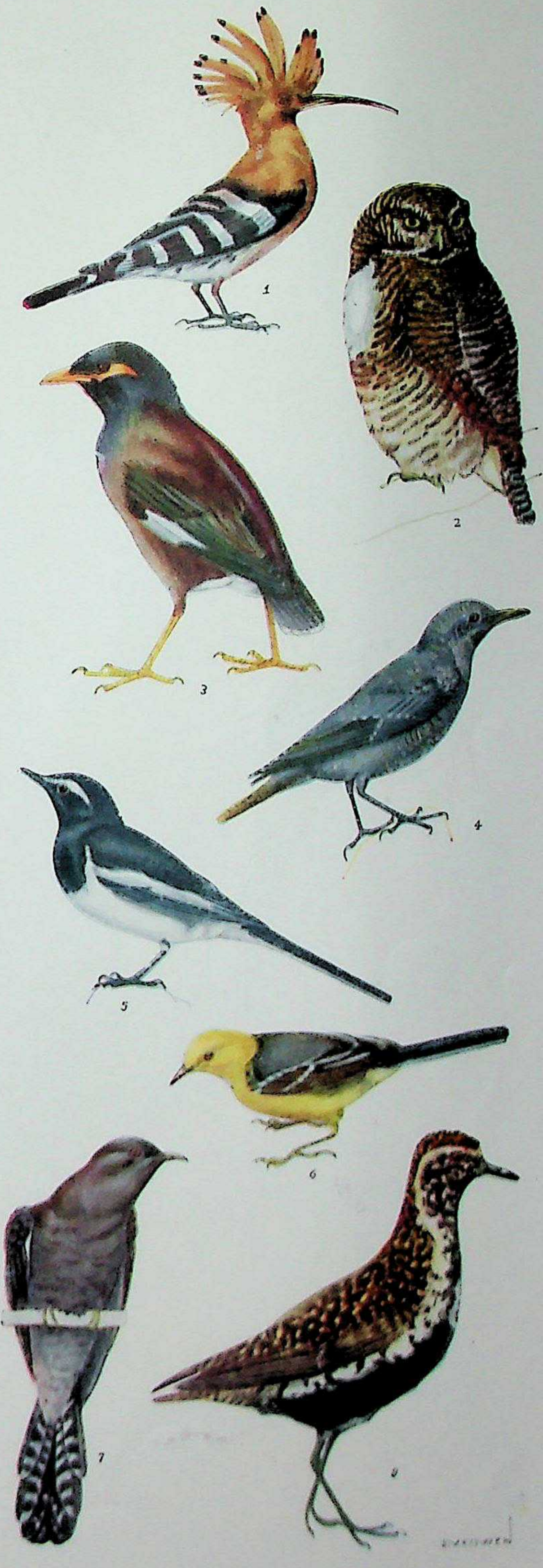
The family parties of the common myna that during the rains stalk boldly about the verandan upon strong yellow legs, afford a great deal of amusement to the interested observer. How proudly *pater familias* fluffs up his chocolate brown neck feathers and squawks "What a fine fellow am I!" while the others gather round him, politely bowing their heads in agreement. What comical quarrels arise among them too, when the delinquent member of the party lies upon its back, uttering shrill protesting squeaks, while the others set to and berate it soundly with beak and yellow claw. Though I have often watched one of these noisy quarrels in progress, I have never been able to decide in what manner the guilty birds transgressed.

One most charming cameo of bird life I was lucky enough to glimpse from my bedroom window before breakfast not so very long ago. A tiny sun-bird, hovering in the air like a humming-bird, was feeding its fledgling offspring with nectar drawn from a hibiscus blossom whose scarlet petals were not brighter than its own glossy plumage. The fledgling remained upon its twig uttering hungry calls, while its parent sought diligently for more nectar, probing flower after flower with its long delicate beak. I saw the process repeated several times.

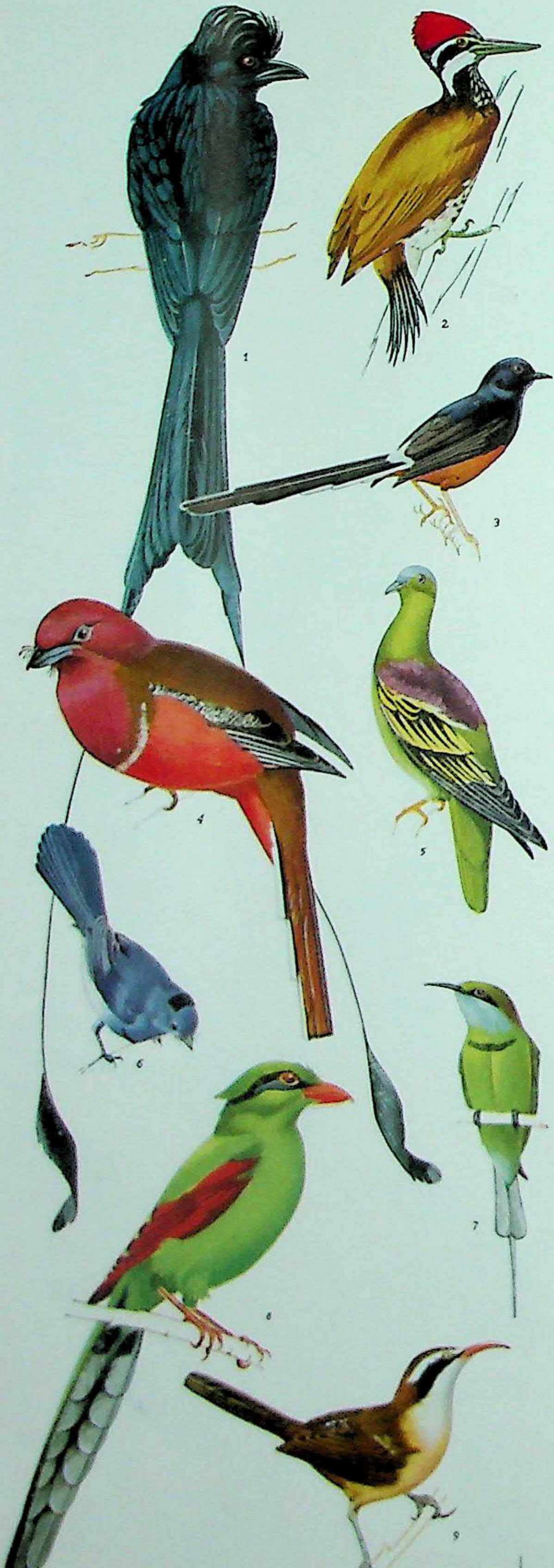
A very welcome visitor to our flower garden is the pied wagtail, whose advent heralds the approach of the cold weather. We have other winter visitors too, the dapper pied harrier which seeks his prey as he skims on soundless wings low over the stubbled rice-fields; a pretty little redstart; and a blue rock thrush that haunts the bungalow verandah solitary and silent. I have never heard him utter so much as a cheep. Other birds dally here for a few days on their way south at the beginning of the cold weather (from about the middle of November) and again as they go north in March and April. The yellow-headed wagtail and the hoopoe are among these. Flocks of handsome golden plover come to feed upon lonely stretches of marshy ground during the cold season too, but they are wild and wary and difficult to approach.

The Indian plaintive cuckoo and the koel come to us for the rains; I once saw a young Indian plaintive cuckoo being reared by a pair of king crows, though I believe that this is not their usual choice of foster-parents.

Out in the jungle that fringes and intersects the tea garden areas, an altogether different set of birds are found. Here are to be seen the lovely green magpies; gaudy trogons; parties of scimitar babblers and noisy necklaced laughing thrushes; as well as the lesser hornbill and the racket-tailed drongo, known locally as the "bhim-raj," which makes a most engaging



1. Hoopoe. 2. Jungle owlet. 3. Common myna. 4. Blue rock thrush (male). 5. Pied wagtail. 6. Yellow-headed wagtail (male). 7. Plaintive cuckoo (male). 8. Golden plover.



1. Large racquet-tailed drongo. 2. Golden-backed woodpecker (male). 3. Shama. 4. Red-headed trogon (male). 5. Ashy-headed green pigeon (male). 6. Black-naped flycatcher. 7. Common or green bee-eater. 8. Green magpie. 9. Austen's scimitar babbler.

pet. Here in the thickets the shama sings as sweetly as any blackbird in an English garden; while in the tallest and most inaccessible forest trees nest small parties of the gigantic adjutant bird.

There are other birds in the green bamboo jungle too, of whose bright feathers I have been unable to catch more than a fleeting glimpse, and I have heard strange fluting calls uttered by birds I have been unable to see. Who knows but some of these may not yet have been identified?

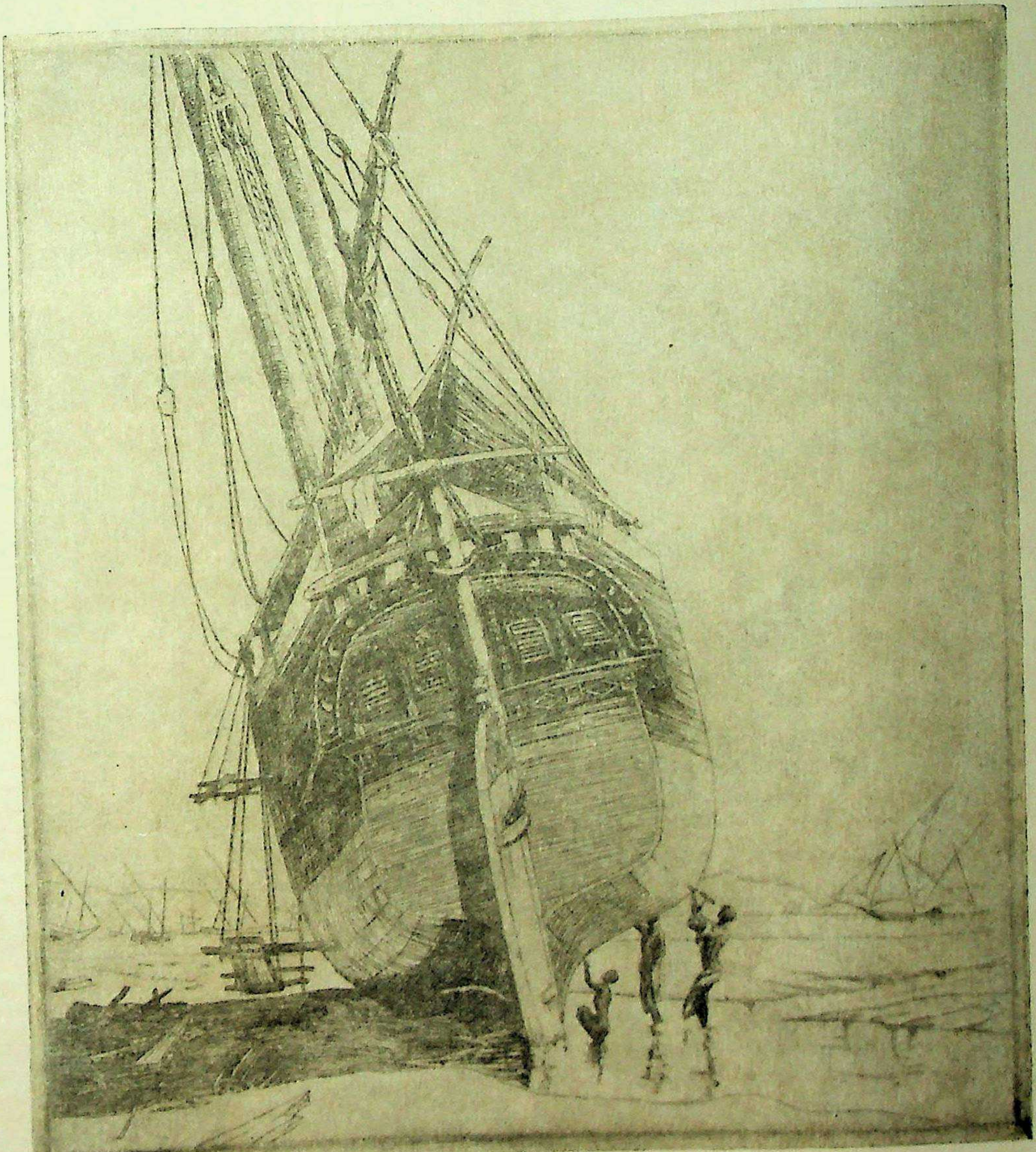
Among the trees planted to shade the tea bushes at least half-a-dozen varieties of woodpeckers feed and nest—some with red crests, some with yellow.

Watching birds feed is an intriguing aspect of bird life. Often of an evening I have gone forth alone and taken up a not too obvious position, whence I can watch the coppery-green bee-eaters snapping up dragon-flies on the wing; or the arboreal green pigeons, pretty creatures that they are, come flying down to gorge themselves upon the black-juiced berries of the lowly "misheri" bush; often I have thrilled to see a jungle fowl bringing out her chicks to forage about the edge of a rice field. And what an assembly of birds gather round to sup upon the white ants as of a warm evening they sally forth from some obscure hole in the ground to seek liberty in the air. Not only king crows (those acrobatic experts) but kites, bulbuls, mynas and even owls, tree-pies and jungle crows, all crowd together to feast upon the luckless ants as soon as they take to the air upon fragile gauzy wings.

And so at the end of the day comes the birds' bedtime. There are several bamboo clump dormitories growing beside the road that runs through the tea garden. Here, as the sun sinks towards the western jungle, collects a vast concourse of birds. In one clump sleep all the mynas of various species; in another the bulbuls flock together, while in a third the turtle and spotted doves seek their rest. The chirruping and chattering that goes on as each bird looks for its own family group, or ousts another from its selected perch, or merely says "good-night," can be heard from the bungalow. So have I heard the London starlings chatter their valediction to departing day from the cornices and ledges of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, high above the traffic that roars round Trafalgar Square.... When we drive past our bird dormitories at night there is an outburst of drowsy cheeps, protesting at the sudden and disturbing glare of the head-lights! At one period of the year, before the nights grow too cold, the sparrows, too, choose a bamboo clump as their night's shelter.

Even now, after ten years in Assam, I am still coming across birds that I have never seen before. The latest of these was unknown to me until a week or two ago, when a lovely black-naped flycatcher selected the mango tree outside the sitting-room as his especial feeding ground. It is a delight to watch him, as he restlessly turns this way and that and flirts the feathers of his tail in the intervals between each sortie from his perch; his head and shoulders shimmering a deep metallic blue in the sunlight.

A catalogue of names is always tedious. I have mentioned only a few of the birds that I have seen; and these are but a fraction of the many to be found in this hot, wet and green land.



Stranger from the Gulf - Bombay

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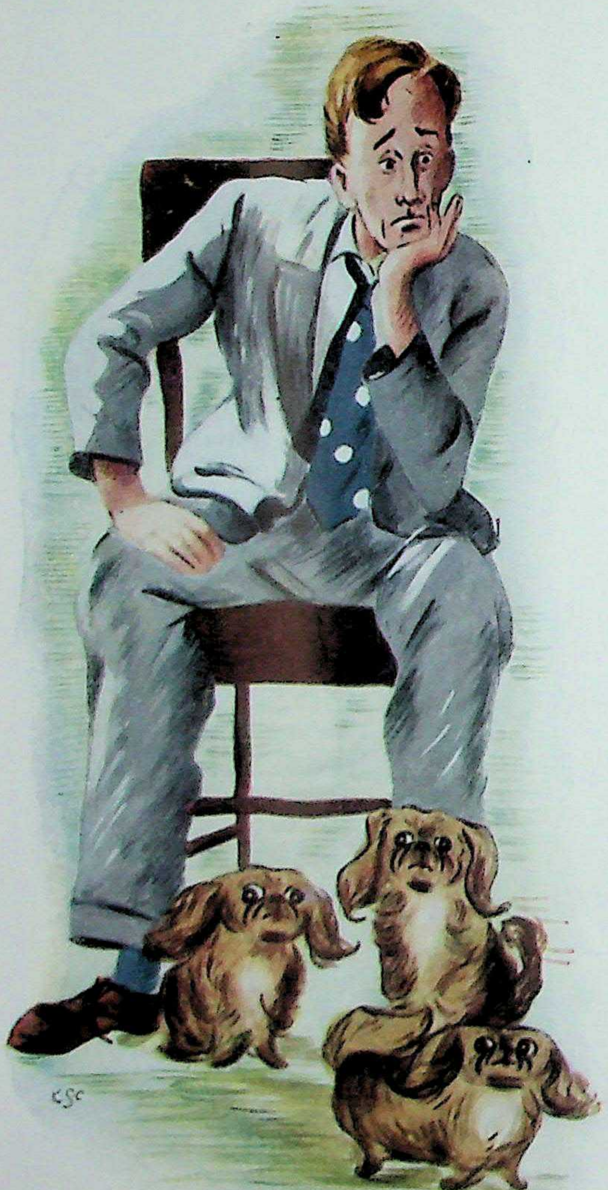
by B. L. JACOT



THE man with the gold braid on his cap handed David the harness. 'Valuable animals, they say, sir,' he offered.

Young Mr. Harrington took a turn with the lead round his wrist. The three Pekes had their heads cocked up, watching him in a way that looked somewhat Oriental and inscrutable. 'They look more like cats to me,' he said.

'I've been told,' the doorman mentioned, scratching his ear, 'that the American lady, Mrs. Van Houten, has napkins served with their meals, and they've got their initials in brilliants on their hair brushes.'

Three fat, golden backs, the parting of their *coiffure* taken in the middle, stood waiting before Mr. Harrington like manicured tugboats. 'Why not?' he argued. 'She has all the money in the world.' To the dogs he spoke: '*Allez*! Mush!'

To his surprise the troupe, as one, flung themselves into the collar, and like Moses passing through the Red Sea, Mr. Harrington found himself crossing Piccadilly at their heels. In Green Park now, he could see that the harness was a posh affair of Morocco leather and silver fittings. The braided lead branched into three reins, each snapping into a silver buckle that crowned a canine bodybelt or brassière. Three tails feathered up in brave curls to the breeze that came over the hillocks from Buckingham Palace in the distance.

'Well,' Mr. Harrington said to himself, 'it might have been worse.' He was thinking of what had been sprung on him just before he left the office that evening and of the masterly initiative—not to say ready improvisation—he had shown old J. G. And if you think improvisation is not what is wanted in London in these glorious times, your second guess is coming up.

J. G.'s voice had come at him out of the inter-office phone, and the Managing-Editor's tone was man-to-man. 'Harrington, old boy, you live just across the Park from here—do me a favour, will you?'

The truth was, Mr. Harrington who was tall and very blond, was scared stiff of J.G., the man who had given him his job. So he hung on to his end of the conversation like a leech and—naturally, you can guess the result. Three dogs.

Here was this Mrs. Van Houten, on a visit with her husband; and if an American citizen owns one of the great newspapers of the world and, on the side as is the American way, about one hundred and ninety-three other newspapers, not so great, well, you look after his wife, don't you, while she's trying to find something to eat in London?

And if she has to go off for twenty-four hours to a nursing home and won't trust any veterinarian? The answer is three dogs, and see that nothing happens to them! 'If,' explained J.G., 'Mrs. Van H. was in a shipwreck and had to choose between picking up one of those Pekes and her husband, you'd find it would be old Van H. striking out for the nearest shore.

So, here was young Mr. Harrington with the Pekes.

A tornado seemed to rise up and strike him. The master lead cracked like a whip, jerking him forward in a bound and at the end of the line something blurred like a catherine wheel in space. Some time later, an Aberdeen terrier flew out of the maelstrom, landing afar on his retracted undercarriage and making for home.

From all sides dog leads converged on Mr. Harrington's legs, like ribbons round a maypole, and with a wild yell he collapsed. By the time he had got to his feet a crowd had collected and they handed up his hat like a bucket passed at a fire. Three inscrutable heads were cocked up at him. He unravelled the leads.

In the quarter mile that separated him from his apartment building, they met no more dogs, but the Pekes were not inactive. They torpedoed a policeman, brought a telegraph boy off his bicycle, derailed a baby carriage and so startled a slumbering cat he fell off a window-sill.

'Better give you a hand with them,' a little man in a Derby hat suggested, as Mr. Harrington held the cat high over his head out of reach of the ravening pack. He gathered up two of the dogs and Mr. Harrington the other and that is the way they arrived in the elevator.

Mr. Harrington's hat was on the back of his head and a dog was greedily licking his face when he noticed the girl. She was tall and slim and her coat was mink, and the hair curved on her neckline as if sculpted in burnished metal. A most peculiar feeling came over Mr. Harrington as he met her grey eyes.

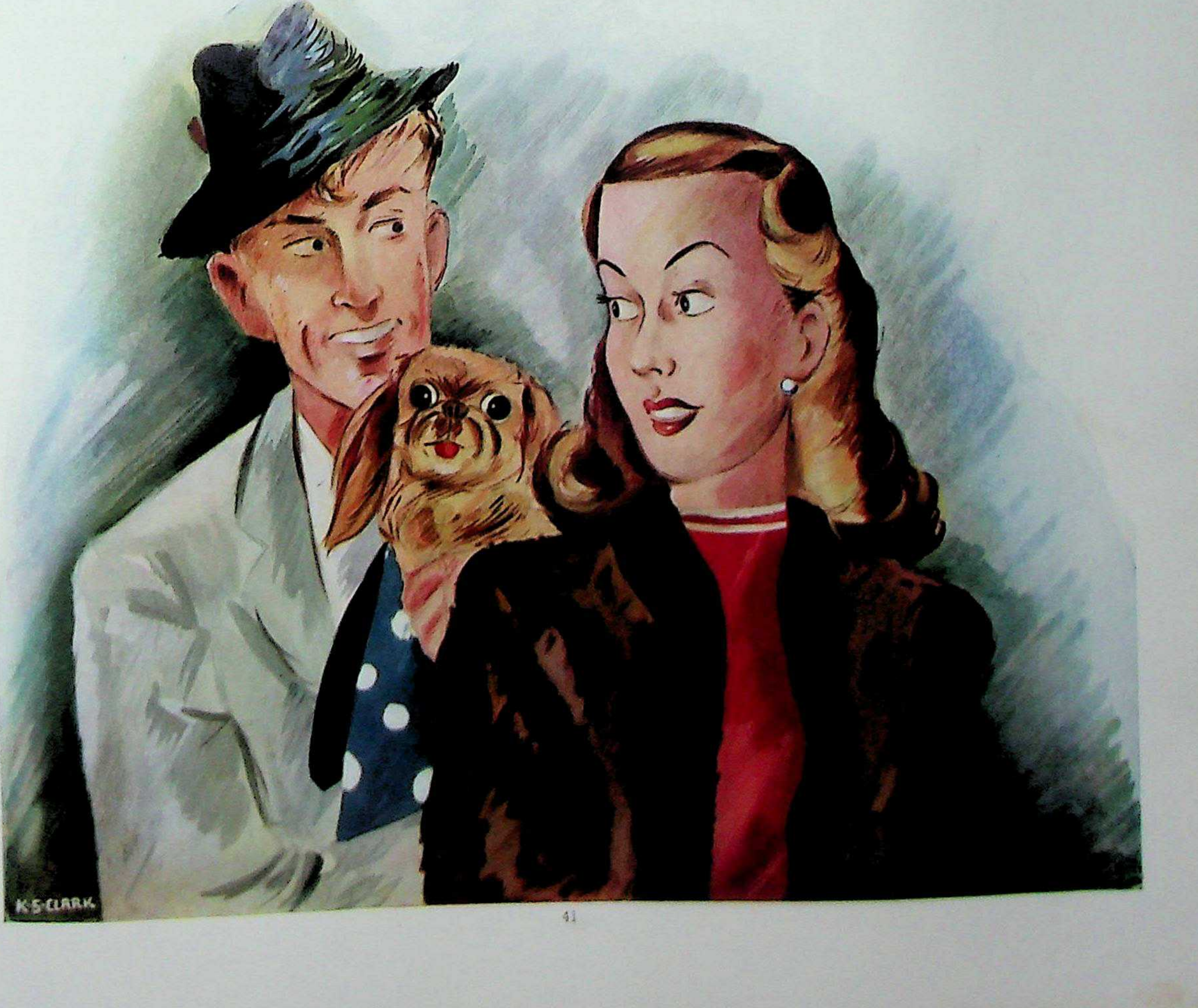
'The dog seems fond of you,' the girl said as the elevator began its ascent.

Unable to disengage himself from the passionate embrace, he was trying to think of something to say when the Great Lover in his arms swung its head and with a yelp flung itself like a shot from a gun on to her chest. To Mr. Harrington it seemed that dogs' leads whistled in the air like hail and the elevator was filled with yapping shapes. He found himself on his collar bones peering out at two long legs spread over the floor and a mink coat submerged in a surf of Pekes. To one of this girl's ankles Mr. Harrington's wrist was pinioned by the lead.

They sorted the mess in the corridor. Mr. Harrington's timely acquaintance in the Derby disentangled the harness while the elevator man rescued his hat. The girl's hat was over her eyes and her stockings were laddered. She snatched her handbag from Mr. Harrington's palsied grip and with anger flashing in the eye left him without a word.

Inside his apartment David poured himself a drink and he poured one for his acquaintance. When he could bring himself to look at the dogs they were standing before him, heads cocked up expectantly. 'Better shut them up somewhere, sir,' the man advised. 'Spirited animals.'

They unleashed the Pekes and locked them in the bathroom. 'There,' announced Mr. Harrington, 'they



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will stay until 9.30 a.m. and I get the police to escort them back to the Berkeley Hotel and Mrs. Van Houten.'

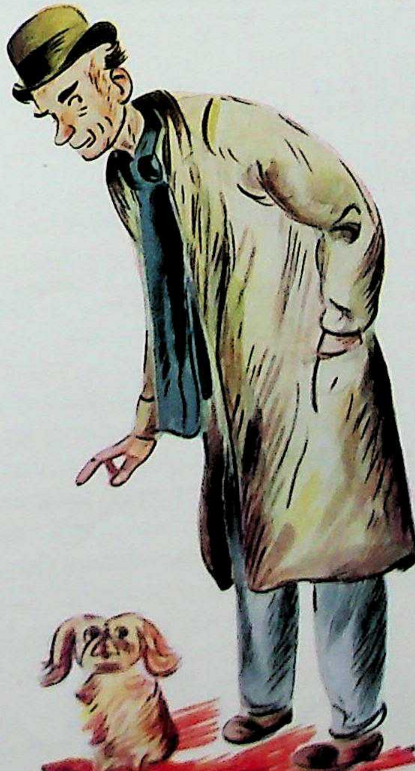
A scratching sounded on the other side of the bathroom door. That, he decided, would be the big one, the one with the white blaze on its chest, the Great Lover that looked like a cross between a young lion and a Chinese bandit. This thug, he had noticed, was always in the van. The other two cut-throats, frightful as they might be, were only stooges.

The citizen in the Derby had spotted this, too, and curiously he seemed to have taken a liking to the brute, fondling it, toying with its harness, even loth to leave it. Mr. Harrington thanked him for his services and the man departed.

He had a meal sent up from the restaurant and it was as he resigned himself to an evening alone in his apartment that he suddenly thought that the dogs must eat. Each time he passed the bathroom snuffing and scraping sounds followed his passage, punctuated by blowings and snortings at the crack under the door. Mr. Harrington tried them with the scraps of his chicken. Bandit A sniffed with extreme delicacy and turned it down flat. Stooge B and C were equally fastidious. He tried them with digestive cookies without result.

He dug a tin of anchovies out of the kitchen and it was only by sheer speed of wrist that he saved the container itself from the maw of the Bandit Chief, who took the whole issue in one gulp. Stooge A got the only other can of anchovies, Stooge B a pot of Devilled Relish. Mr. Harrington then examined the window and carefully locked the door on the outside.

Mr. Harrington was thinking of the girl. The trouble was he had been so close to her when he first saw her, and with a girl like that you had to be broken to it by gentle stages. It was, Mr. Harrington thought, like looking at the stars or something. It gave him a wonderful feeling, but, if he could have had a free and unfettered choice in the matter, he would have preferred not to have had a Pekinese dog licking his face at the time.



It was just after eleven o'clock when a terrific commotion from the apartment next door brought him with a leap out of his chair. Howling, shrieking, the crash of furniture, and a wailing as of a lost soul . . . A horrible thought struck him and he dashed to the bathroom. It was empty and the window giving on to the leads was open at the bottom.

He beat on the door of the next apartment and the door flung open. 'Get them away! *Get them away!*' the girl cried. 'They're killing a cat.'

In the living room a smoke-blue Persian cat was balanced like a tight-rope artist on the top of a picture and rising like the breaking of swells against a seawall the Bandit and his stooges leapt to the attack. Mr. Harrington seized the Bandit and hugged it to his bosom. Pandemonium ceased. He could see now that various chairs and tables were overturned, marks of steeplechasing over the luggage which was piled about the place.

'Get those brutes out of this apartment!' the girl ordered. 'They pouted into my bathroom from the roof and if I see you again I'll complain to the management.'

'My bathroom window was shut.'

'I heard you walking on the roof. Will you get them out!'

'I was walking on no roof,' he stated. This girl looked like Ann Sheridan. She was in a lacy *négligée* from the folds of which her feathered mules appeared. He set down the Bandit. 'I'll get your cat down,' he said.

She was balancing on a chair, reaching up. 'It's not my cat! Your dogs brought it in.'

'They're not my dogs.' He reached up beside her, but she lunged back sharply with a mule and kicked him in the midriff. At the same time she began to wobble. 'You don't,' threatened Mr. Harrington, 'have to start any horseplay.' He gathered her in his arms, carried her across to a chair, and let her fall in it from a height. He was not a man who in the ordinary way lost his temper. He made a quick grab at the cat and put it out into the night and the dogs watched it go without interest. 'You leave your windows open,' he said.

'Is there any law against it?'

'All I offered was to help you with the cat.'

'Might I remind you that you are still in my apartment?'

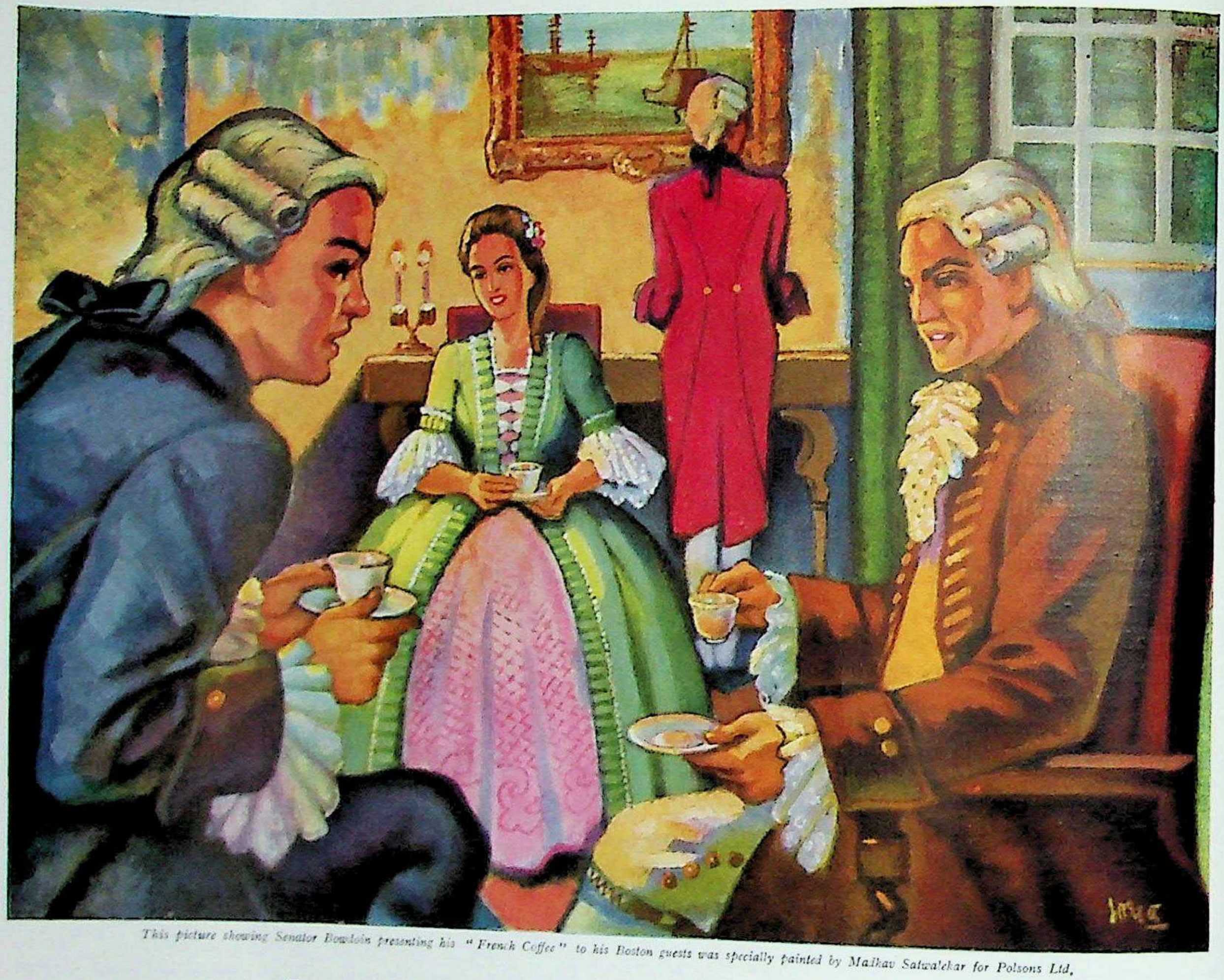
'And you kicked me in the ribs.'

'I could think,' she said, 'of a good way of ending the visit!' She was looking at the Bandit and now she picked him up, examining the harness. 'Jewelry on dogs!' she sneered.

This was news to Mr. Harrington, but he could see now that the Bandit, in fact, wore a filigree of diamonds on his back. 'I'm sorry they tore your stockings,' he said.

'Think nothing of it. I enjoyed it and you know how easy it is to get stockings in this country.'

He squinted and read a label on the luggage which said: Claridges and Paris. She must have just arrived and that was why he had never seen her before. 'You're American?'



This picture showing Senator Bowdoin presenting his "French Coffee" to his Boston guests was specially painted by Madhav Satwalekar for Polsons Ltd,

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'Would you mind,' she told him, 'taking yourself and your perfumed and bejewelled pets out of my apartment ?'

He gathered an armful of dogs and shut them up in his bathroom again. This time he made double sure the window was shut and as he left he noticed Bandit chewing something. It was the fragmentary remains of a feathered mule and he dropped it silently into the kitchen bin.

Before he got into bed he took a look into the bathroom to make sure that all was well. The effect was odd. As soon as the Pekes saw his pyjamas, three manicured doormats shot between his legs. When he got back to his bedroom Stooge A was curled asleep in one armchair, Stooge B in the other, and the Bandit was curled on his bed. They evidently knew their rights and Mr. Harrington let it go. He had had enough trouble for one night, he thought. But when he went to get into bed himself he had to make a running jump of it to get his limbs safely under the covers, and, even then, every time he moved in bed Bandit growled in a low, menacing way as if to say that throats were two a penny where he came from.

Mr. Harrington slept soundly. He was not the type to allow the troubles of the day to carry through into the night. What had he to worry about, anyway ? He had dropped out of the Army into a good job and wasn't he doing J.G. a good turn ? And Mrs. Van Houten—she might even offer him a job in America, overcome with gratitude for the zeal and unrelenting care he had shown in watching over her bejewelled pets.

It was two a.m. when he woke with a start. There was someone in the apartment and slipping out of bed he crept to the door. He could see an indistinct shape in the hall and he was just going to jump when a torch flashed on and he saw the house detective.

'Ssh !' warned the man. 'A prowler on the roof. Don't make a noise. We've just seen him from the other side outside your windows.'

Mildly interested Mr. Harrington stuck his head out of the sitting-room window under the stars, watching the detective climb on to the flat roof-top. Then a sudden realisation came to him and he dashed back into the bedroom—the bathroom. The Pekes had disappeared.

For a wild moment he hoped that they might have trailed off after the prowler. He even tip-toed across the landing to listen at the girl's apartment, but all was still. The detective had silently disappeared about his business and the night was still once more. He was about to get into bed again when the detective's head appeared through his bedroom window.

'You haven't heard anyone in the empty apartment across the landing ?' he enquired.

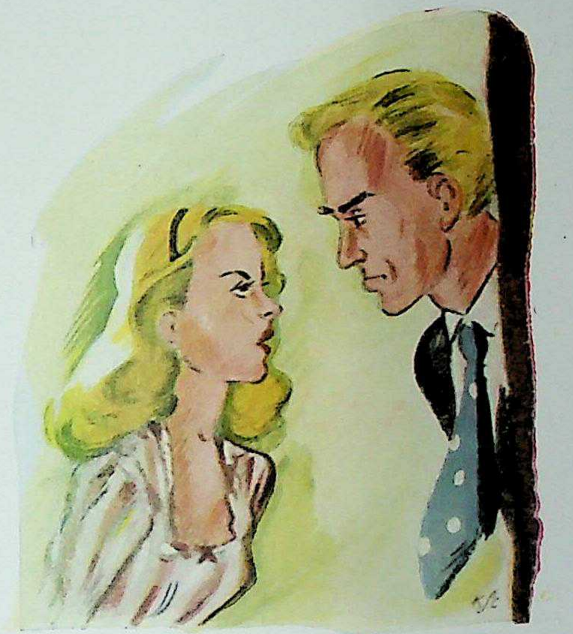
'I've been asleep.'

'Who's in the apartment next door ?'

'An American girl just arrived from Paris.' He thought for a moment. 'If you see any dogs on the roof they belong here.'

It was the mention of her name. He realised someone should warn her about her windows, and he had to knock for some time at her door before she appeared. 'Oh, no !' she said. 'Not you again !'

Mr. Harrington drew a breath and told her. His heart was skipping two beats out of three, but she said : 'How do I know this isn't just another gag ?'



'There's a detective out on the roof,' Mr. Harrington offered.

'I heard him earlier—or,' she reflected nervously, 'someone else. Possibly you.'

'Positively not. Would you like me to have a look round and shut your windows ?'

'That would be nice of you.' She had drawn closer and now she was following him round. 'Perhaps,' she mentioned, 'it's someone after the jewelry on those dogs. It's worth a lot of money.'

'Great snakes ! And they've disappeared ! I thought they'd pushed off for an airing, or something.'

She was staring at him. 'Who got them out on to the roof the first time ?'

'I shut the window of my bathroom. Someone must have opened it.' 'So you've not only lost the dogs, you've lost the fittings !'

'Gosh ! They're Mrs. Van Houten's dogs and she'll kill me !'

The girl started. 'You're telling me she brought—those—over to this country ?'

'Yes, yes, yes !'

'There's no need to yell at me. I haven't lost her dogs for her. I don't have to admit I've been letting them run all over the place, chasing cats and wrecking furniture.'

'I must find that detective !' he babbled.

'Why don't you pull yourself together ?' She was a shape beside him in the dark room. But—the right sort of shape. And her eyes seemed to be shining like stars through a haze of cloudy hair.

'Those dogs have lost me my job,' he told her.

'I shan't dare sleep a wink with prowlers prowling about.' Her shoulder was touching him now and it sent chariot races up and down his spine.

'I'll stay with you,' he offered.

'And what about the dogs ?'

'Let Mrs. Van H. worry about them !'

Her face was under his in the darkness and it was fairly obvious that the rest of her wasn't fifty miles away. They had switched the chariot races to a skating championship. Suddenly she seized his arm. '*Listen !*'

He could hear someone at the bedroom window. A scratching sound was followed by a dull thump, then the tread of cautious footsteps. Young Mr. Harrington snooped round the kitchen door. 'Don't leave me!' she breathed, but Mr. Harrington wasn't listening.

He flung the door back and pounced across the hall and a startled yell followed—and the crash of a hurtling body. 'I've got you!' Mr. Harrington yelled. 'Keep still or I'll knock your brains out!'

The girl ran to the switch and pulled it. She saw that Mr. Harrington was sitting on a little man in a Derby and the little man was convulsed with fear.

'You!' cried Mr. Harrington. 'So now I begin to tumble to it. What've you done with those dogs?'

'Guv'nor! Honest—I snooped into the bathroom and they weren't there. And I took a snoop into your bedroom and that big one brought'em out like a flash. They were all over me and I've spent the rest of the night looking for 'em. Take it easy, guv'nor—that's the honest truth!'

'He's telling the truth,' the girl said.

'That doesn't get the dogs back and—'

The sound of a sack of coal being dumped came from the bedroom and the girl screamed. 'So you've got him!' the detective exclaimed. He jerked the little man to his feet and ran his hands over him. 'Have you missed anything, madam?'

'If anyone else jumps into this apartment,' she told no-one in particular, 'I shall have hysterics.'

'Take him away!' Mr. Harrington ordered. 'Charge him with snitching my dogs. Not,' added Mr. Harrington, 'that it matters a damn.'

The detective went and closed the door. The girl did not move. 'Don't take it so hard,' she said. 'I'll let you in on something. For,' she said, 'thank you for lamming into that prowler. I've never been so scared in my life!'

'He was virtually a friend of mine. I brought him into the place and I expect he hung about after having spotted the trimmings on the harness.'

'At the time,' she argued, moving closer, 'it might have been Joe Louis for all you knew.'

He was thinking, all this and heaven, too? So he ran his arm over her shoulders and if she shrank away it was less than a pre-shrunk three per cent. So he drew her gently to him and kissed her.

'So I'm going to tell you not to worry,' she said, after a while. 'As soon as I saw the diamonds I knew why that dog jumped on me in the first place. I must have met them in Paris when she bought them, and they recognised my smell.'

'Who?' demanded Mr. Harrington, somewhat dazed by the progress of events and not quite himself. 'Who bought what and where?'

'Mrs. Van Houten. She married my father in Philadelphia last fall.'

'Do you mind saying that again?'

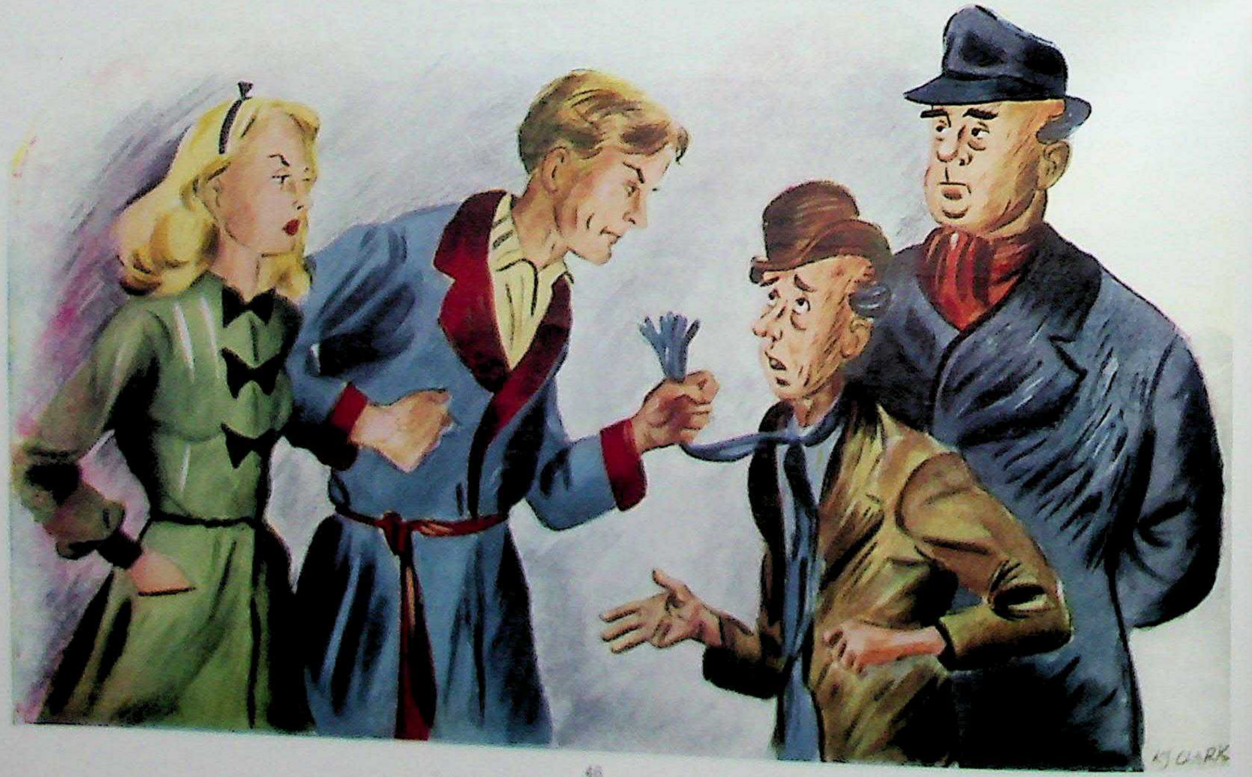
When she had said it he let out a whoop. 'Then you can tell her—you can tell your old man....Is he really your father?'

'You've lost the dogs and good riddance,' she told him. 'She'll settle for a marmoset or maybe a Panda. At any rate we have a little peace—'

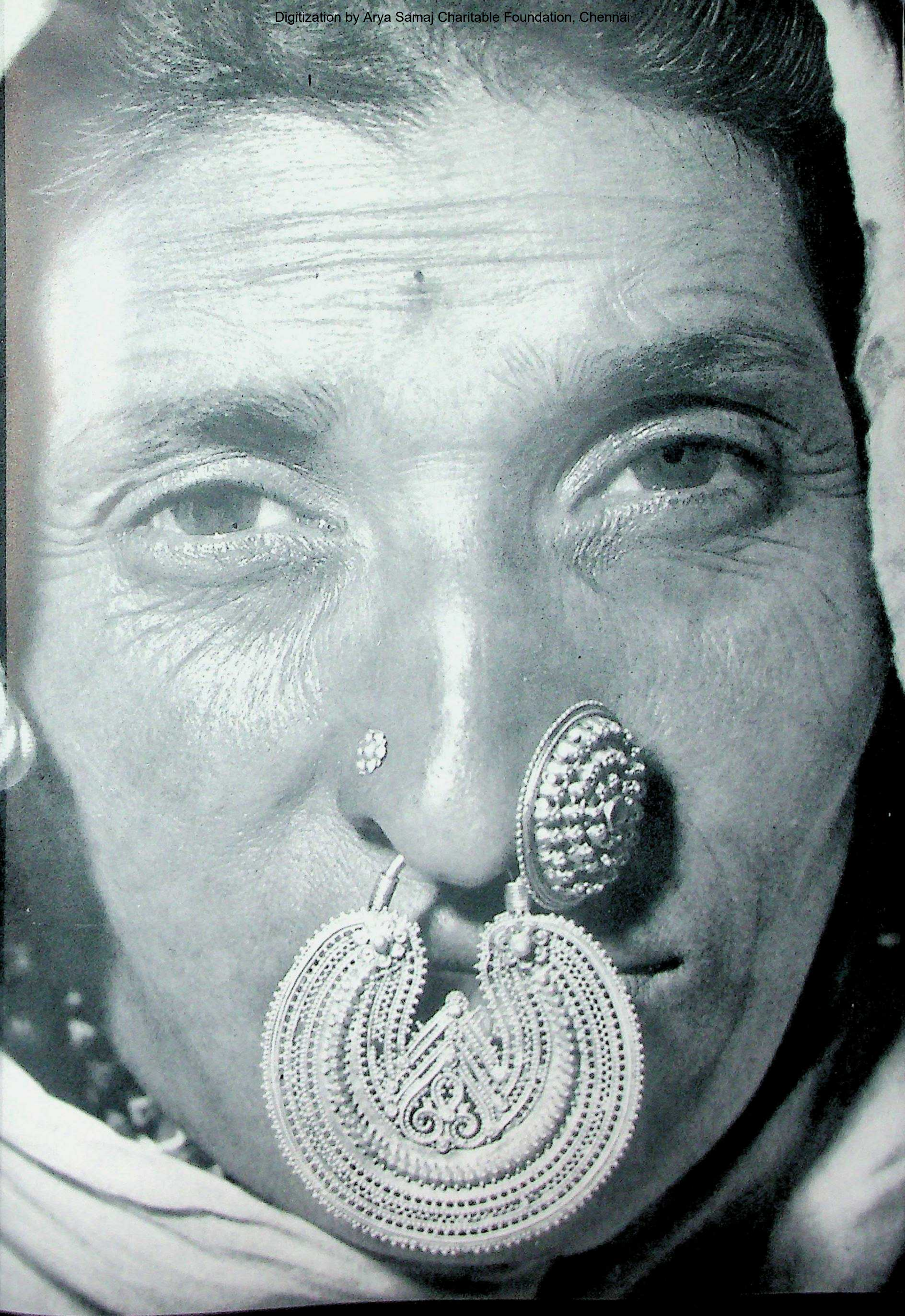
The wail of a soul in torment split the night air and out of the bathroom shot the blue streak of a Persian cat in full flight. On a frenzy of yapping the three Pekes streamed by and after a dazzling steeplechase there it was again—cat on the picture and the dogs surging up the wall.

She drew him back as he moved to intervene. 'Kindness is wasted on that cat,' she said. 'Let it rip.'

'Yes, indeed,' agreed Mr. Harrington.



Above: A small piper on China Peak, Naini Tal, by G. Gearing-Soper
Page forty-eight: A by-lane in Fez, Morocco, by Adrian Brunel, FRPS
Page forty-nine: A study by Margaret Bourke-White by courtesy of Life magazine
Page fifty: Perahara Festival Dancers, Ceylon, by I. I. Jammahomed



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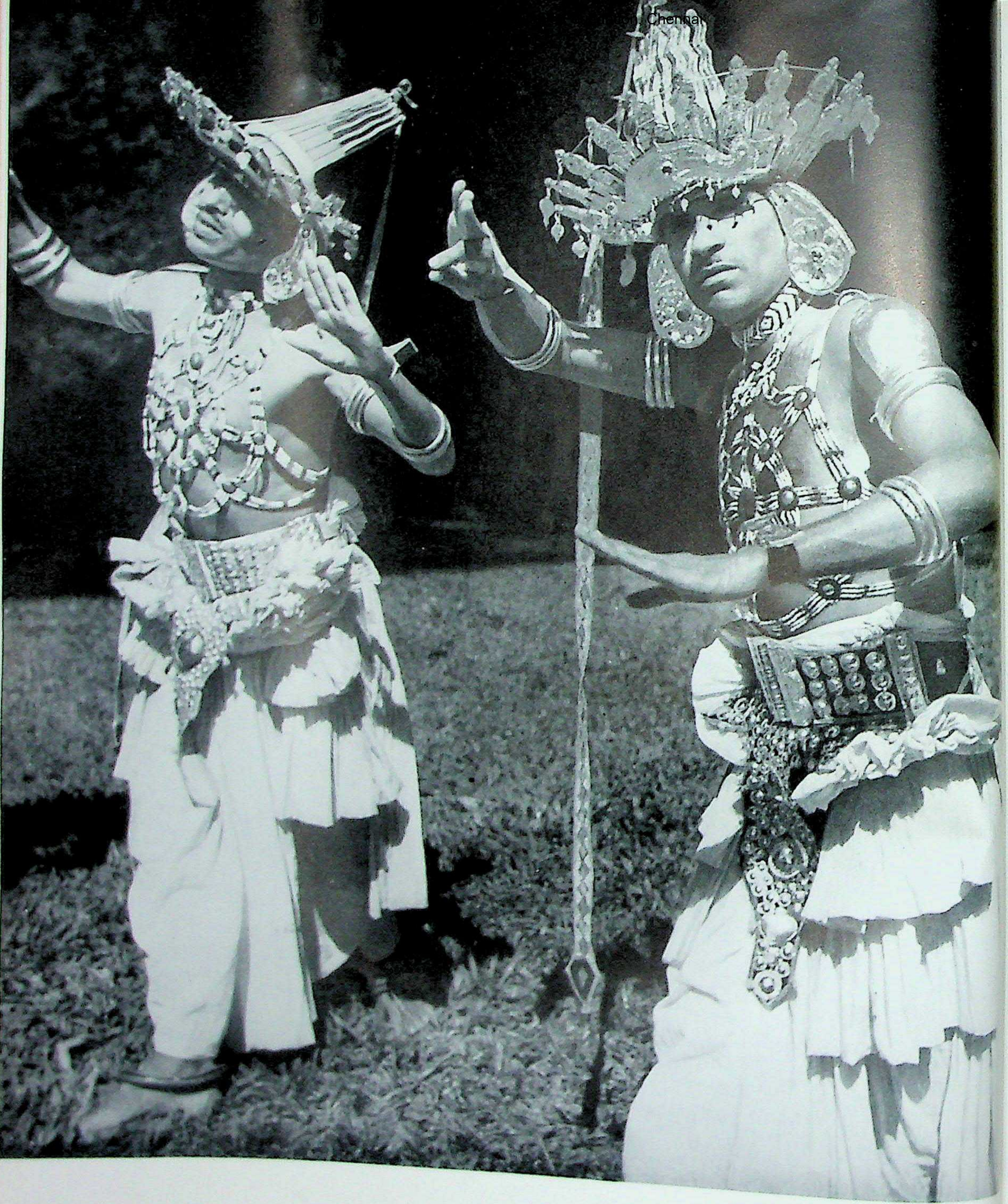

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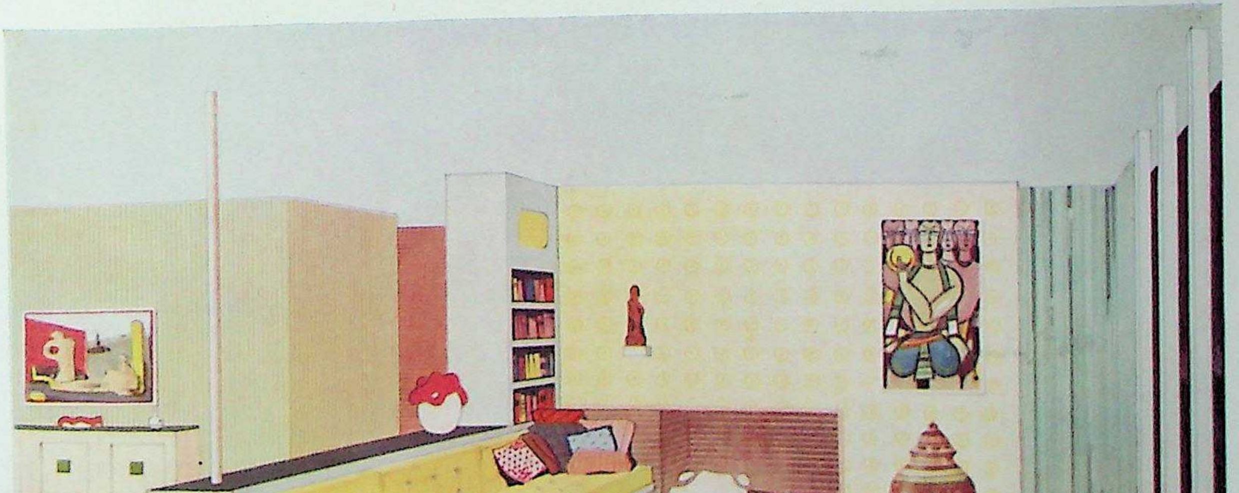

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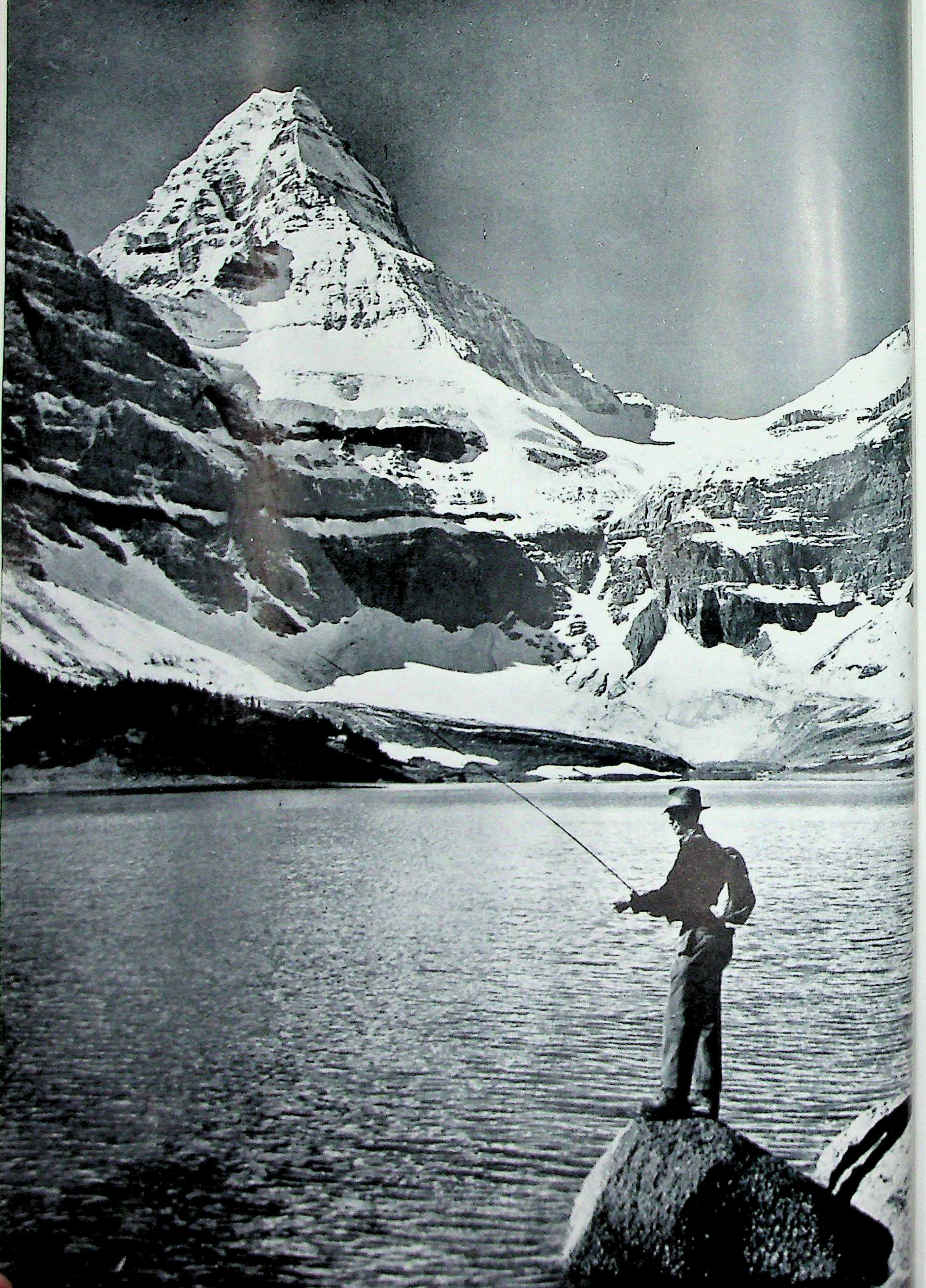
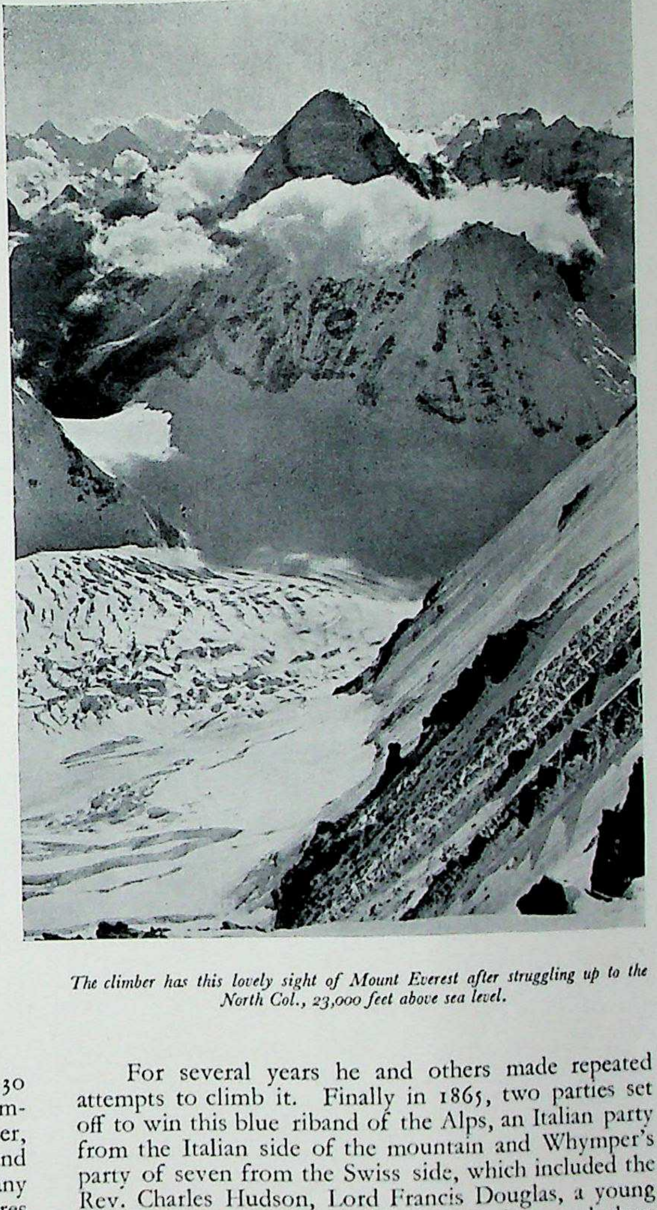


Photographing the Mountains

by

F. S. SMYTHE



The climber has this lovely sight of Mount Everest after struggling up to the North Col., 23,000 feet above sea level.

I BEGAN to climb mountains more than 30 years ago and many staunch companions accompanied me on my climbs. There is one, however, that has *always* accompanied me, my camera, and this has brought back a record numbering many thousands of pictures to remind me of my adventures and experiences on the roof of the world and the splendid scenes amidst which they took place.

Many Englishmen have begun their climbing in Britain, and to find your way across the British hills in all kinds of weather with map and compass, and to scale their steeper sides and crags, is to lay a sound foundation of mountaineering skill and experience.

But it is the Alps that are the Playground of Europe and the cradle of mountaineering, and I was fortunate to live in the Austrian Tyrol and Switzerland for two years as a youth and to acquire sufficient experience to be able to climb safely without guides on the most difficult routes, and later on the great peaks of the Himalayas and Canadian Rockies.

The most famous peak of the Alps is the Matterhorn and its conquest by Edward Whymper in 1865 is one of the most fascinating and dramatic of stories.

For several years he and others made repeated attempts to climb it. Finally in 1865, two parties set off to win this blue riband of the Alps, an Italian party from the Italian side of the mountain and Whymper's party of seven from the Swiss side, which included the Rev. Charles Hudson, Lord Francis Douglas, a young and inexperienced fellow, Douglas Hadow, and three guides, among them the great Michel Croz of Chamonix, the finest guide of his generation.

The party was successful and arrived on the summit to see the Italians far below, but on the way down Hadow slipped. He fell against Croz and knocked him over; the rope then pulled down Hudson and Lord Francis Douglas. Whymper and the two remaining guides withstood the shock of their falling companions, but the rope broke, and the four were precipitated to their deaths down the 5,000 ft. precipice beneath.

The disaster created a world sensation and it is said to have damned the tide of mountaineering for a generation of man. But nothing in the end could long resist that tide and mountaineering is now one of the world's great sports—to those who climb, the greatest.

I have myself traversed the Matterhorn, and in weather so bad that my companions and I were forced to shelter for two nights in a small hut not far from the summit. During our climb we found various bits of

◀ *This view of Mount Assiniboine is typical of the beautiful mountain and lake scenery in the Canadian Rockies. The lakes are often full of trout.*

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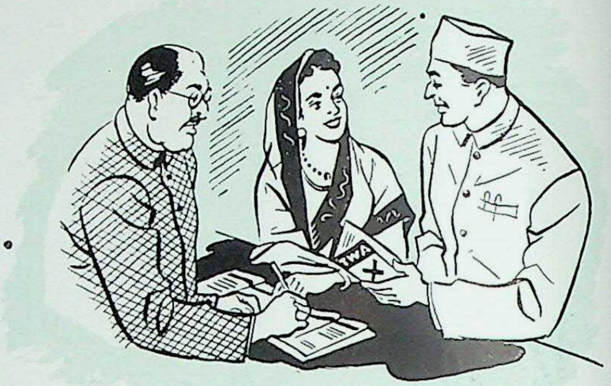

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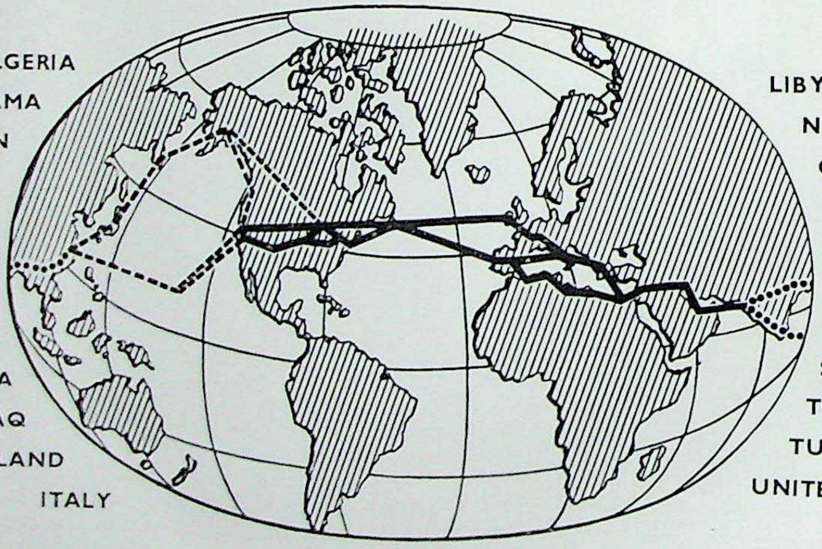

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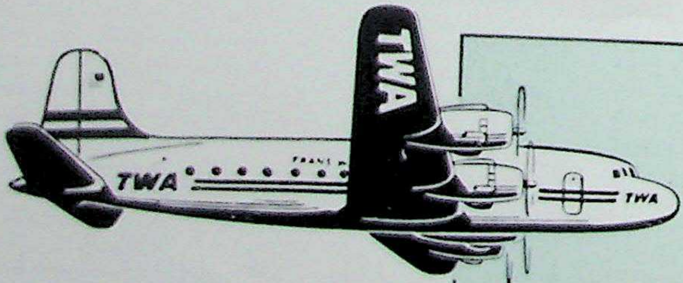

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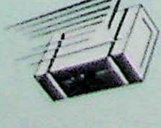

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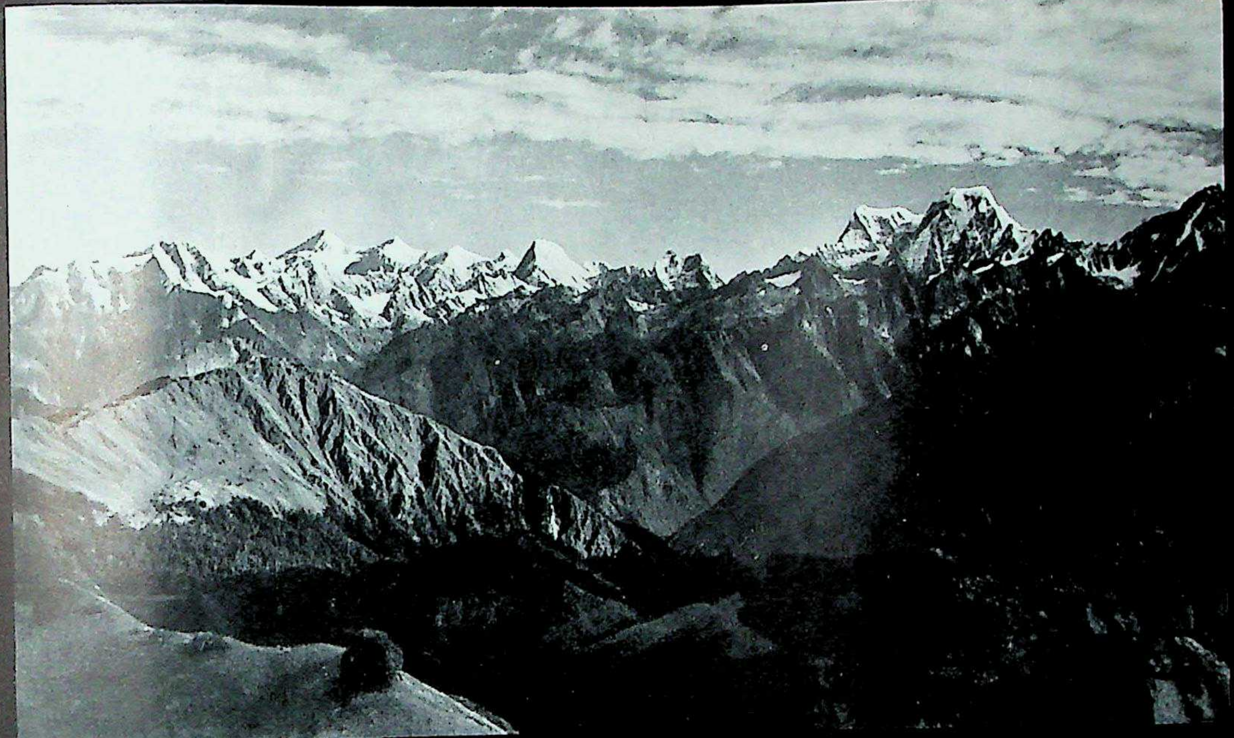
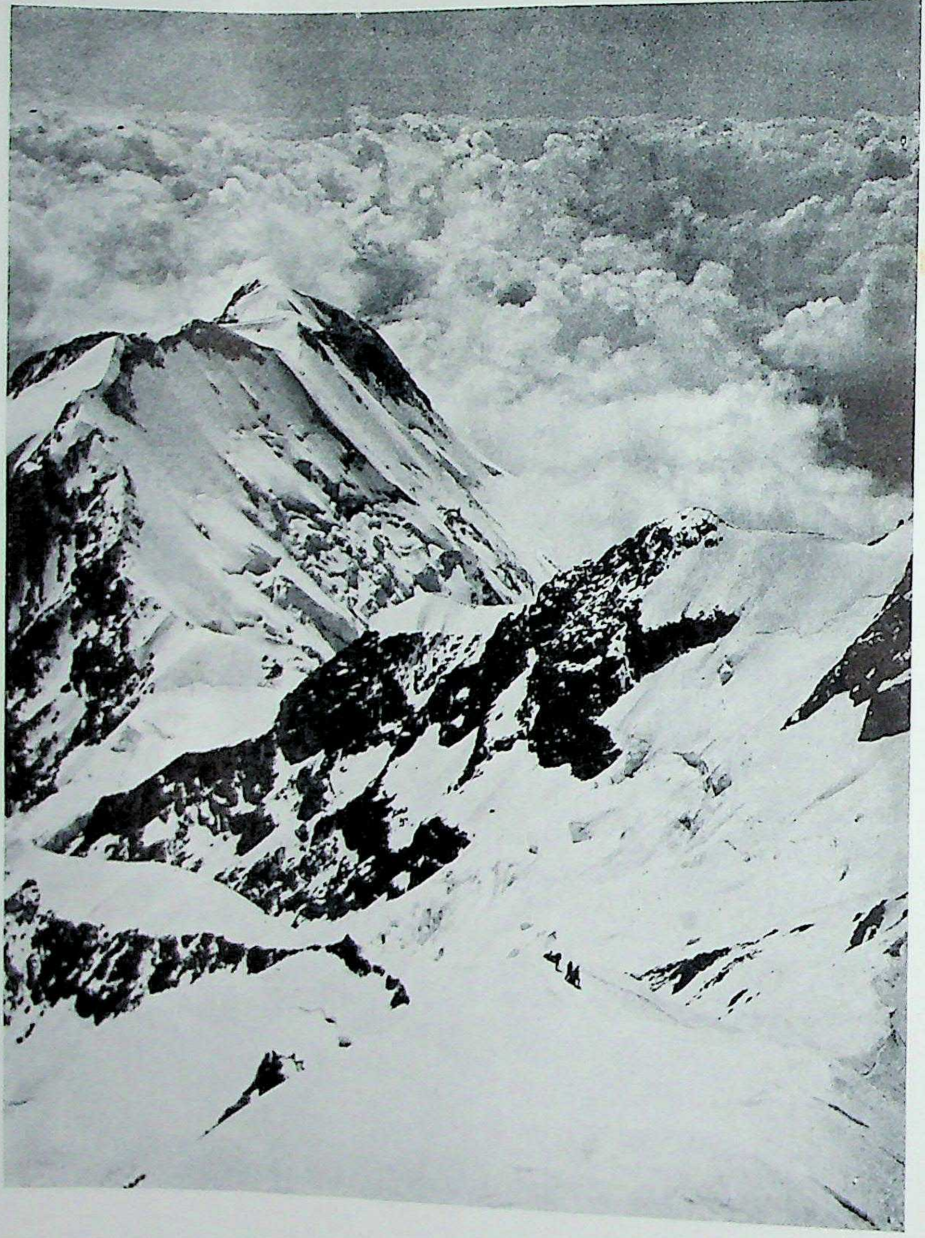


▲

Looking from the Kuari Pass in the Central Himalayas and seeing Kamet, the Mana peak, Nilgiri Parbat (the square-topped peak in the centre), and on the right Gauri Parbat and Hathi Parbat.

◄

November afternoon on the high plateau of Ben a bhuird in the Cairngorms, near Braemar in Scotland, where mountaineers can learn the use of map and compass.



A party climbing Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in the Alps, from the Italian side with the Dôme de Méage in the background.

rope and rucksacks lying about and we learned later that there had been a terrible disaster to a party of six Italians, two of whom fell and were killed and two more who died of exposure.

Mont Blanc, the highest peak of the Alps, is little more than a long snow walk by the ordinary way in good weather, but before 1927 the great side of the mountain known as the Brenva which falls down into Italy was still unclimbed. In that year and in 1928 Professor Graham Brown and I made two new routes up the mountain of great beauty, interest and difficulty which a number of mountaineers have since followed.

In 1930 I accompanied an International Expedition to Kangchenjunga both as a mountaineer and as correspondent and photographer to *The Times*, London. We had permission to enter Nepal but failed to climb the mountain from that side, and were nearly wiped out by an ice avalanche which killed one of our porters. Later we climbed the Jonsong Peak, 24,340 ft., the highest summit at that time attained.

Profiting from this experience, I led a small party of British mountaineers to the Himalayas the next year, and we succeeded in climbing Kamet, 25,440 ft., the first of the fifty or more peaks over 25,000 ft. in the Himalayas to be trodden. We also explored the headwaters of the Alaknanda and Gangotri rivers, the sources of the Ganges, and visited the sacred shrine of Badrinath.

In 1933, '36 and '38 I took part in the Mount Everest expeditions. The 1933 expedition came near to success and we reached a point only 850 ft. from the summit, 29,002 ft.

When E. E. Shipton and I tried to reach the summit, Shipton was unable to continue so I had to go on alone. I had made a vow before leaving our camp that on all accounts I must secure some photographs. Photography is not easy physically at those great heights as hands soon become numb and frostbitten if removed from the gloves. Mentally also the brain works so slowly that taking a camera out of the pocket, and setting the shutter and focus, requires a tremendous degree of mental concentration and determination.

I remember climbing that day in a strangely detached frame of mind as though standing aside and watching myself. I also imagined that someone was climbing with me and so strong was this feeling that on one occasion, when I stopped for a bite to eat, I carefully divided a piece of mint cake into two and turned round with one half in my hand to offer it to my "companion".

It was not till my photographs were developed that I remembered taking them. They were excellent shots and in one case I had carefully taken two overlapping pictures to form a panorama. I believe that this points the way towards success when battling up those last weary slopes of Everest. You must tell yourself before you start that you are going to get there, and then, when the body is more or less finished, the mind will still carry you forwards.

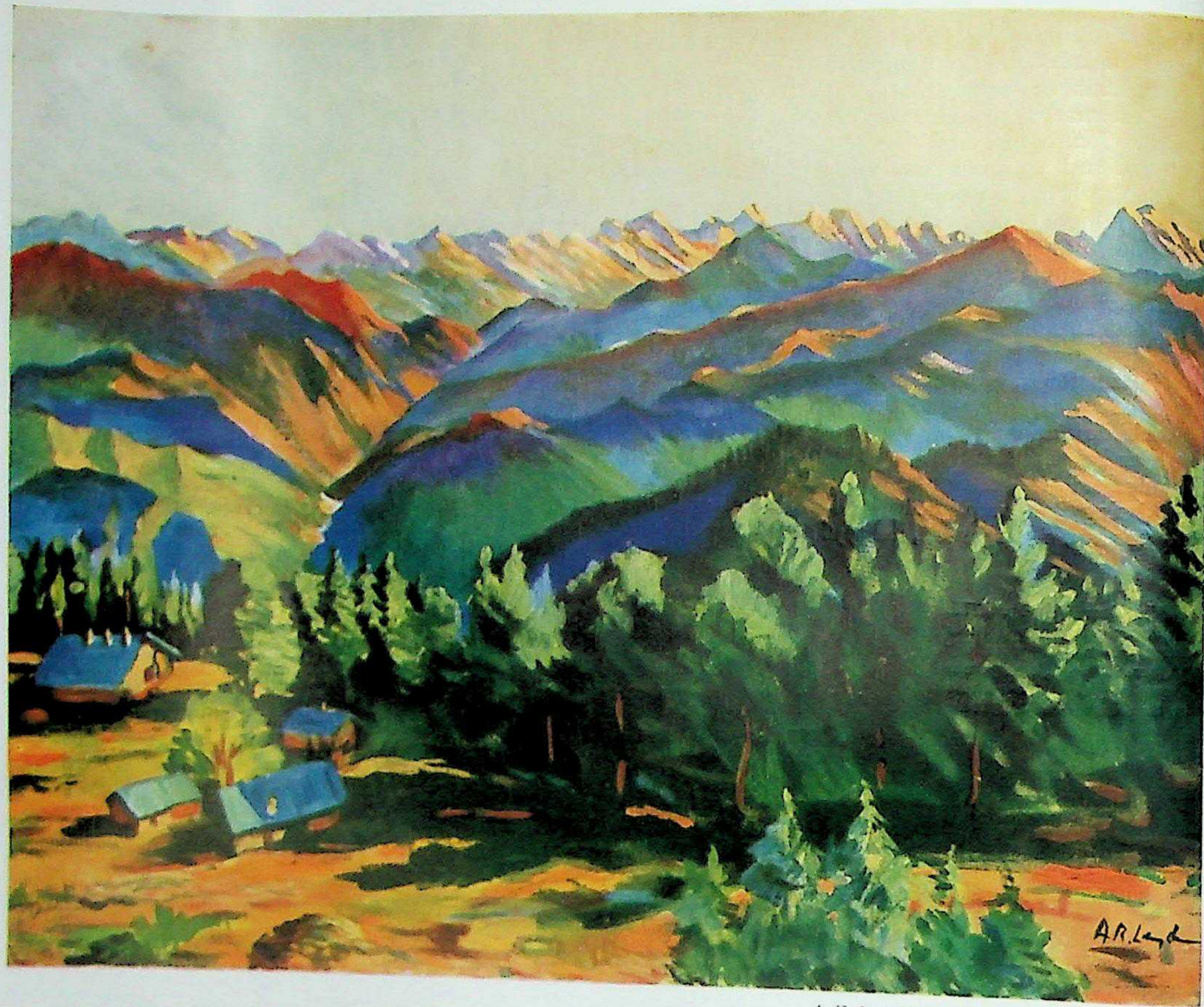
Owing to exceptionally bad weather, and the early onset of the monsoon, the 1936 and '38 expeditions did not get so high as in 1933. Thus my pictures are still the highest-taken on earth.

Many people ask why we mountaineers want to climb Everest. That is a difficult question to answer. There are scientific reasons, of course, but essentially it is for the adventure, and I do not believe a man has really lived until he has pitted himself against some great, and well nigh insuperable, obstacle. Mallory, who with his companion, Irvine, disappeared on Everest in 1924 made perhaps the best reply to the question when he said, "Because it's there."

During the war I commanded a School for Commandos who had to learn sea-cliff climbing and how to look after themselves on the mountains of Norway, so my mountain experience proved useful. Then I went to Canada as Chief Instructor of the training in mountain and ski warfare of the Lovat Scouts.

I grew to love the Canadian Rockies with their great forests and animal life and especially the beaver

The Matterhorn in winter. This most famous peak of the Alps was the scene of a great disaster in 1865 when four of Whymper's party, who conquered it, fell to their deaths from the point marked 'X' in the picture.



A Kulu Valley. Painted by A. R. LEYDEN

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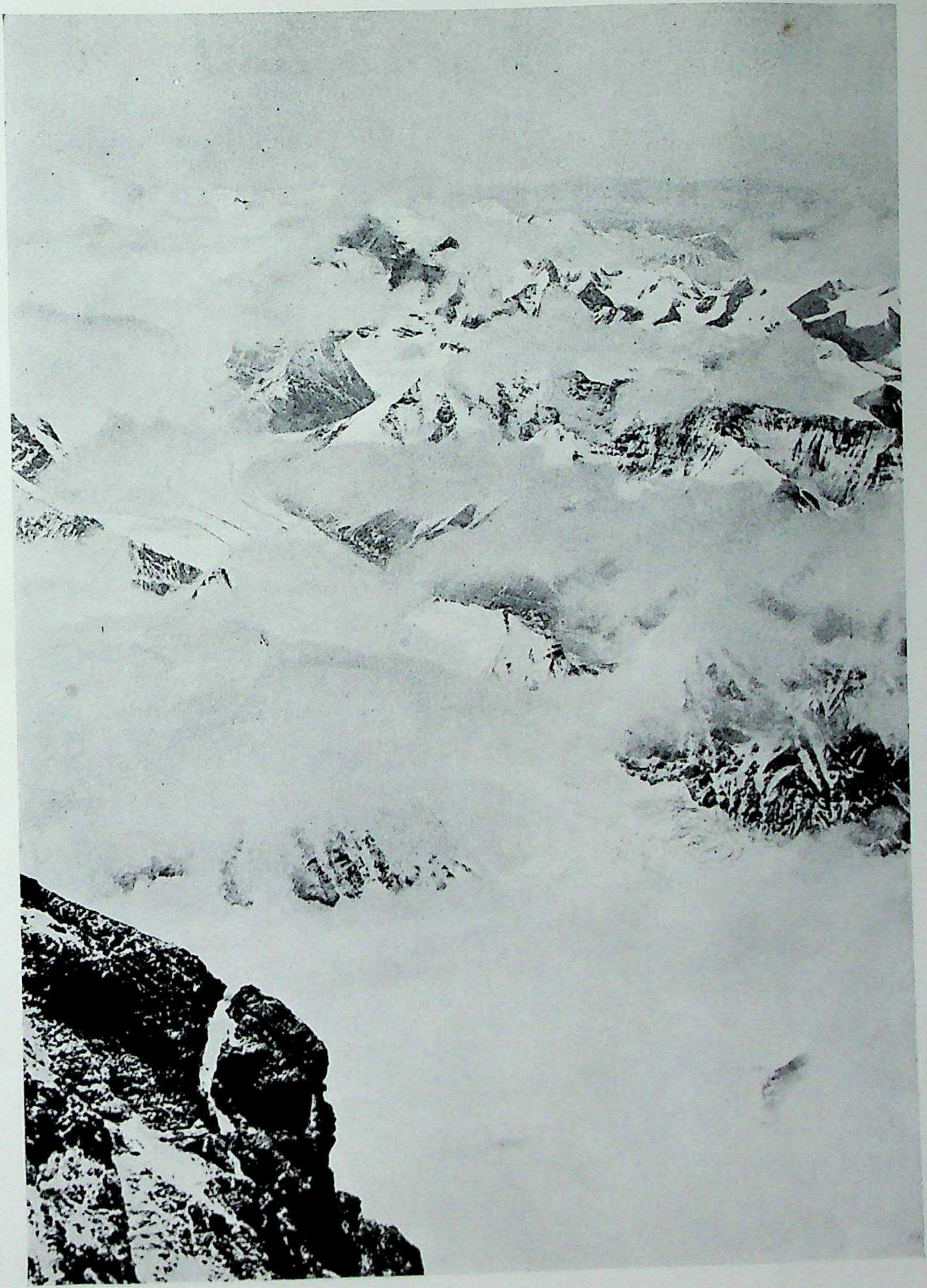
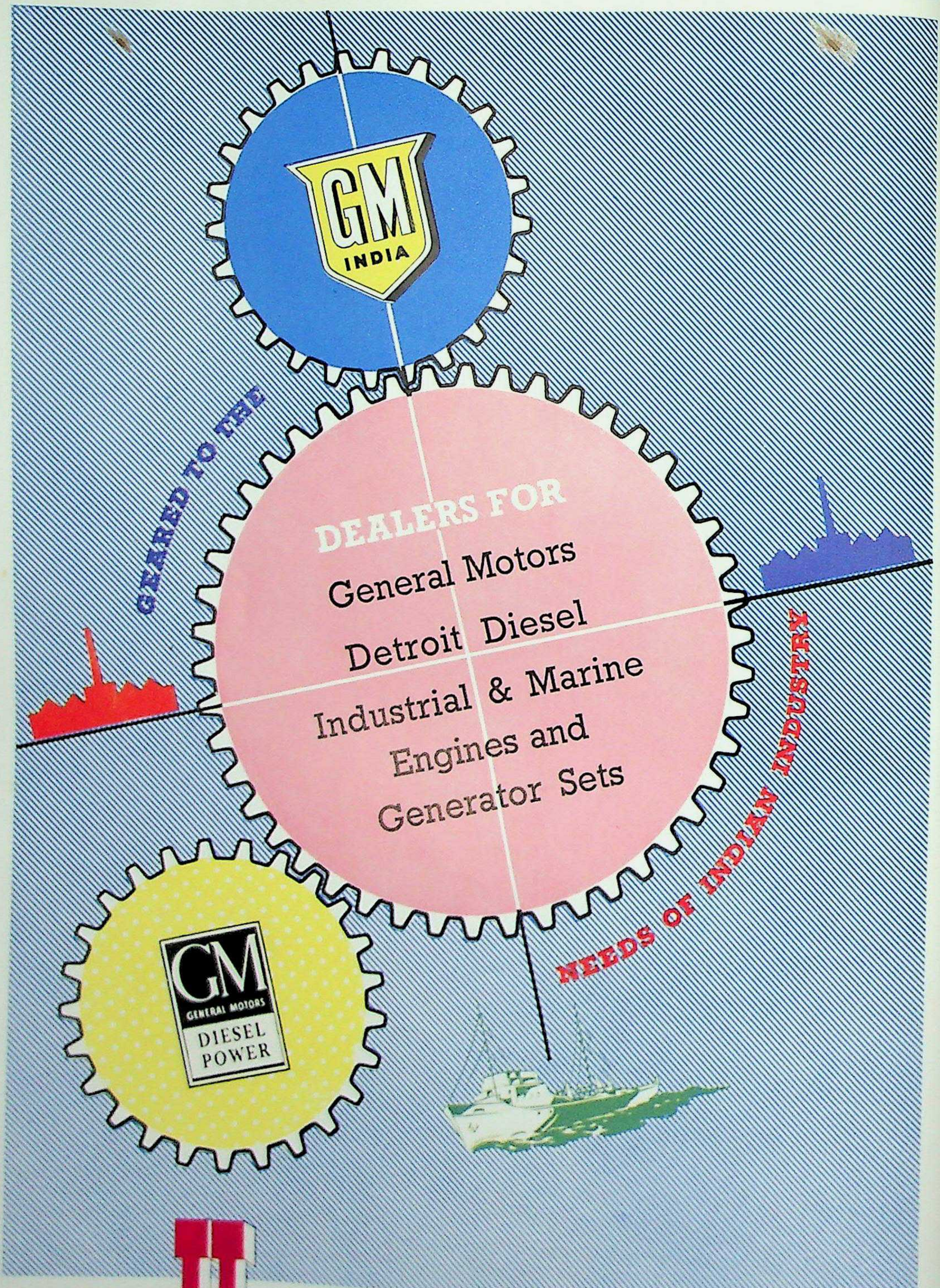


The highest taken photograph in the world is this picture captured by the author at 28,150 feet on Mount Everest in 1933.

which is one of the most interesting animals in the world and the only one that can change its environment to suit itself.

In 1947 I organised a combined British, Canadian and American expedition which flew by aircraft to a lake amidst some 25,000 square miles of unmapped and unexplored country in north-east British Columbia. It made me realise how little of the world is tamed and cultivated.

Of all sports I do not think there is one to compare with mountaineering. It takes the mountaineer to many parts of the world and it has many subsidiary interests such as zoology, geology and botany. I have spent two delightful expeditions collecting plants some of which now beautify our English gardens. Mountaineering keeps a man superlatively fit and active and I hope that if I am allotted my three score years and ten I shall still be capable of climbing mountains.



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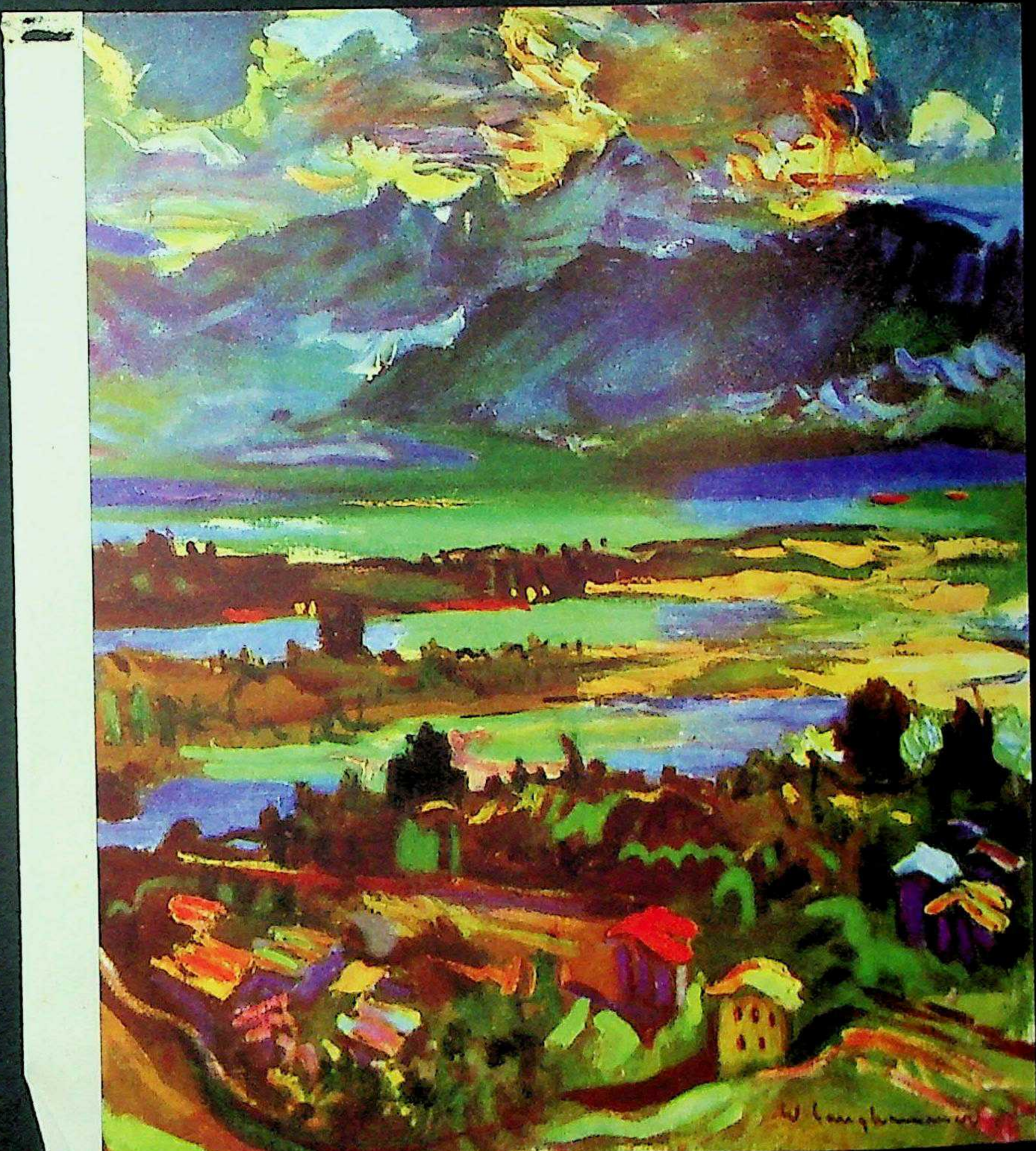

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BHOLA RAM

By F. D. K. Simmance

BHOLA RAM was not regarded as a bright boy in his village. Even his parents, who adored him, and who were simple enough people themselves, admitted that Bhola was a singularly inept lad when it came to the carrying out of any task requiring a modicum of original thought. But he was their third and youngest son, and the heir to his portion of the few bighas of land which his father, old Tulsi Ram, had cultivated for more years than he could remember. So they had to make the best of him, and those who laughed hardest at Bhola Bail, as he was affectionately nicknamed by all around, agreed that his lack of grey matter was to no small degree atoned for by an intensity of purpose which won the grudging admiration of his hardest critics. Once Bhola knew what he had to do, he did it.

This was, after all, important, where there was more than enough work for all, at the well or in the farmyard, at the plough or with the hoe. But it was hard enough, in all conscience, to teach him, and to induce him to hurry over anything was impossible. Bhola only hurried twice in his life, and once it was the last thing he did, and even then he knew just what he had to do.

But if he was slow, he was infinitely painstaking. He never minded how early he started, or how long he took. With meticulous care, he would slowly, faithfully, and to the end, carry out with complete dependability his daily tasks. And the terrible time it took him to discover what they were, and the mistakes he used to make during his apprenticeship to a grown man's work were at least to some extent made up for by ultimate results. He was completely stolid, but completely reliable.

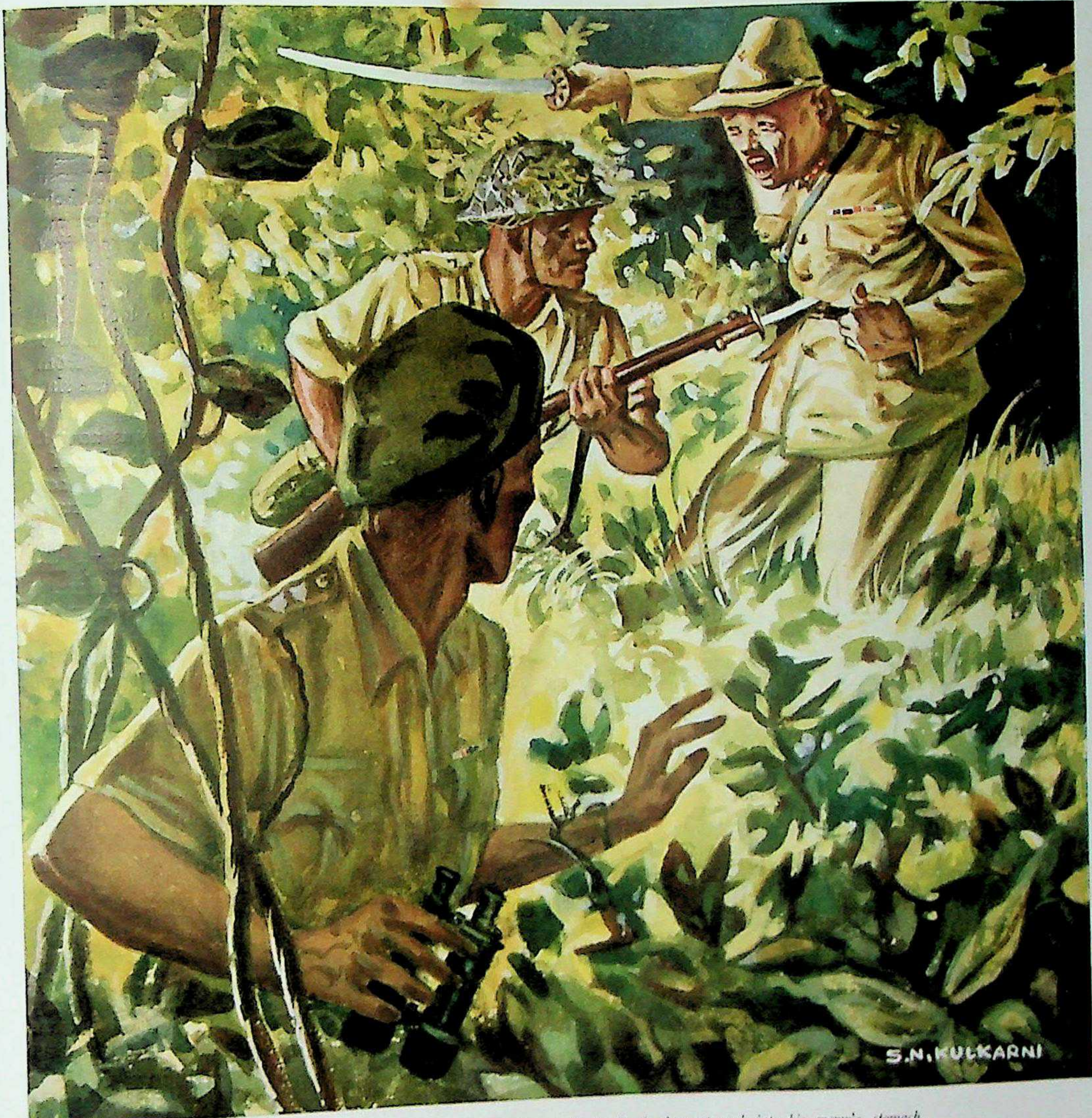
He was fourteen before he began to be of much use around his home. Though he shewed no sign of it,—or for that matter, of anything else,—he was happy. Separated in age from his two elder brothers by some ten years, he was the pet, if also the joke, of the family. He would take his orders, one at a time, since more than one would be more than enough for his almost stationary mind. Early in the morning, while the pink sunrise was setting softly alight the roofs of the byres, and the peacock shook the jewels of dew from his feathers, and the emerald lightning of the parakeets parted the dawn sky, he would go out to the field for the day. He would drive the bullocks on the well, humming encouragingly as they creaked their way up and down. The other peasant boys would sing at the tops of their voices the age-long well song as they sat on the rope, but not so Bhola. He had no such accomplishments, and about six words a day, much less singing, were the limit of his vocal endeavours.

Or sometimes he would plough, or water the squares, each in their turn, until towards noon little sister Chhoti would trip over the fields carrying his chapattis and a muli or two, or occasionally a sagh tarkari, for his mid-day meal. Then he would eat and rest under the shade of his father's cherished mahua tree, watching the pigeon as they flickered by ones and twos between here and their roosts in the grove, until it was time to work out the rest of the day. At last home, following his bullocks down the dust, to feed them and himself, and to sleep with the dark.

When he was sixteen, his eldest sister's marriage and two bad seasons brought difficulties to his home, and to help things out he got a job as calf-boy on a nearby farm. As luck would have it, it was no more than a few months before the old calf-man's death gave understudy Bhola his chance,—and to everyone's astonishment he stepped into the expert's shoes with perfect ease. Every evening at sundown one could see him, waiting outside the barrier with his three hundred or more young calves, while their three hundred mothers were milked in their stalls, lowing with gentle anxiety as they stood looking over their shoulders for their hungry offspring. At last milking would end, and Bhola would come into his own. Here was something, apparently, that he could learn, who could hardly be taught. The call for the calves would come out from the yard, and in through the barrier in ones and twos Bhola would send them. Every one of the calves he would know, and the name of every cow. And as each calf charged or wobbled, according to its experience of the world, through the gate, " Bishnu ! " " Lalli ! " " Maghri ! " —Bhola would call its mother's name. So there was no stampede, no disorder, and inside the compound a calf that got lost would be directed to its supper, and within ten minutes there would be three hundred orderly couples at give and take.

At about his eighteenth birthday, Tulsi Ram summoned Bhola to a family conference. Times had not improved, and it was thought that Bhola should go into the Army. There they would not only pay him, but feed him and clothe him, and how better could they keep within bounds the burden of debt ? Whatever misgiving he may have felt, he shewed no sign of it, and soon he had said goodbye to his calves, and was off with his bundle over his shoulder to become a recruit.

And then his troubles started. He found that he had nine months in which to become a soldier, for at any time during this period he could be sent back home as unlikely to become an efficient one. Three of them had scarcely passed before his instructor reported that at his present rate of progress it would take some fifteen



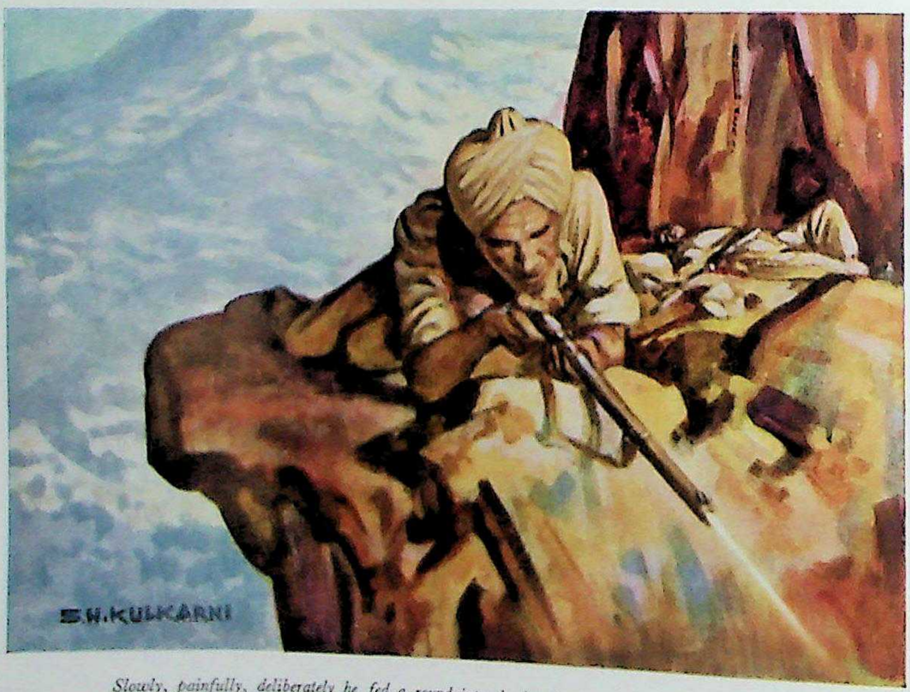
A sword flashed . . . . while it was yet in the air Bhola Ram's bayonet sank into his enemy's stomach.

years for him to complete his recruit's training, by which time he would be entitled to a pension. This was an unsound proposition, from the official point of view, so Bhola was told that if after a few more weeks he did not buck up, he would have to go home.

All sorts of complications set in. He became the subject of a kind of psycho-analytical controversy among his tutors—particularly from the day when, being placed for his first game of hockey in the position of goalkeeper, and receiving instructions that it was his task to prevent the ball from entering his goal, he took these so literally that, falling over his feet and flat on the ground in the kind of mad mêlée that only recruits' hockey can produce, he placed his head, as a last resource, in the path of the oncoming ball. This being now about to enter the net at full cruising speed, Bhola saved the goal, spent some hours in a state of official unconsciousness, and woke to find that he had achieved notoriety as a problem child. Did such an action indicate a mentality too undeveloped for the requirements of a modern army, or did it disclose a singular devotion to duty, a basis of character of which all good soldiers are made? Argument raged, conclusions were inconclusive, but on the whole Bhola did well out of it, if only for the amusement he caused.

Then, Bhola was very popular. He tried so hard. He practised and practised the queer evolutions they tried to teach him, but as fast as he remembered one he forgot another. He just could not learn. And of course there was the fact that failure in the Army meant failing his family, and that gave Bhola's quiet, faithful mind many hours of unexpressed distress. But above all, it transpired that Bhola just loved the Army. He wanted with all his heart to be a soldier. In spite of the fact that his dullness had the inevitable result that he did twice as much work as any other recruit, he was always willing. Of course he was the joke of the place, but it would have taken a very hard heart to have been over-impatient with a chap like that, and so he got a lot of extra official and unofficial help. But everyone thought it was hopeless.

Then on the very day that his doom was to be pronounced, Bhola got ill. So they thought it would be unkind to tell him just then. And along came Tulsi Ram, anxious about him, and of course Tulsi Ram was led along to Bhola's officer, who explained that although they all liked his son very much, he was too slow to be allowed to remain. But he was promised one more chance after he got better.



Slowly, painfully, deliberately he fed a round into the breach, looked for an enemy, and fired.

Which he did, though only by the skin of his teeth. And they sent him home for a fortnight, to convalesce. He came back, full of good food, and off he went to a new start.

No one ever knew quite how Bhola Ram became a soldier. But he did it. At one period they gave him an instructor all to himself. That helped a bit. At others half a dozen instructors would descend upon him *en masse*, each vying with the other for the supreme achievement of making something enter with a degree of permanence into Bhola's mind, or of overcoming his physical inability to let his brain have some dealings with his body. Probably the secret was the blind eye, at all levels.

Well, he justified it. The blind eye knew what it was seeing.

And so, when the great day of attestation came, Bhola Ram with the other recruits stood on parade to promise to be a good soldier. He had achieved his ambition. He never had the slightest chance of promotion. And he was content.

For three years Bhola soldiered quietly on. He was too conscientious ever to be in trouble. He never did anything wrong, even if he never did anything particularly right, and the popularity which he enjoyed as the result of his quietness and good temper ensured that when a technical crisis arose there would be a helping hand not far away. And after a while he became an officer's orderly. His steady character was his first recommendation for this post. His second was that obviously nothing else would ever happen to him. So, with the simple instruction that he had to look after his officer at all times, he was committed to this new role with a devout hope hardly distinguishable from a gambler's prayer that he could compete with the simple tasks involved.

It was now that he saw the first of his two weeks of active service in the presence of the enemy.

He hardly knew how he got there. It was all so new, and event followed event so fast that he had scarcely grasped the wonder of one before the next was upon him. First a seaport, not only the biggest city he had ever seen, but bigger far than he had ever imagined. Then the big ship, which he had never imagined at all. Then the sea, too vast to be more than looked at, wondered about, and then accepted. All leading in so short a time that it seemed but a few moments, to a struggle from the beach into the steaming jungle, into a new and extremely unpleasant world.

Followed then six days of trying and apparently aimless movement through mountain forest. Day after day Bhola Ram shadowed his commander, struggling silently along a few paces to one side, unobtrusively placing himself, where the forest was particularly thick, between his officer and a possible attack at close quarters. He saw no living enemy, though occasionally the sounds of battle, sometimes distant, once or twice not far away, served as a constant reminder to be on guard. On their occasional halts, he did what he could to make his officer comfortable, which was little enough, since apart from the fact that his officer seemed never to rest, they had nothing of their own but their arms and the clothes they stood up in. And all these days Bhola Ram was quietly making History, a thought which certainly never occurred to him. He accepted it all with the same absence of emotion with which but a few weeks before he had seen for the first time the

(*Continued on page 71*)

Above : Ganderbal, Kashmir, by Kenneth M. Trailes ARPS
Page Sixty-six : '[illegible] pals,' by Adrian [illegible] ARPS
Page Sixty-seven : An Indian silhouette, by F. Burke
Page Sixty-eight : Water lilies and laughter, by M. V. Vinayakar

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wonder of the sea, of a ship, and the people of a strange land.

And then, towards noon of the seventh day, Bhola Ram did something quickly, for the first time in his life. As he heard a whistle blow, he saw the bushes part. He saw, or knew without seeing, that his officer was scanning a braek in the jungle, his back turned to his peril. The enemy officer had no more than eight yards for his rush. Bhola Ram had about the same distance to reach him, but he was there. A sword flashed. While it was yet in the air Bhola Ram's bayonet sank into his enemy's stomach. And at the same moment the sword fell, missing its target, biting deep into Bhola Ram's shoulder. And his officer's life was saved.

There was orderly confusion then. There were not many of them, and they were soon killed. The party pulled itself together, preparing to go on. Bhola Ram's officer knelt by him for a space, holding his hand. Bhola Ram tried to speak, failed, and then over his dull, unemotional face passed the vestige of a smile . . . and there they left him.

* * *

He did not die, in spite of the drawn-out torture which was a necessary part of the business of getting him to a hospital and skilled medical aid. But he got there at last, hanging on to life, and after many weary months found himself back at the centre where he had lived as a recruit. Of course he went home, to the old welcome, to which he did little justice. He described all his journeyings in about twenty words and his one and only fight in six, and with that they had to be content. But he renewed happy acquaintance with his friends, with the fields, and with his calves, now parents themselves, and was looked upon, without his noticing it, with a good deal more respect, and returned to his duties.

At these, by dint of repeating them so often, he was now tolerably efficient. So he had a peaceful enough life, his damaged shoulder gradually regained its strength, and the years passed.

* * *

It was the day of annual celebration in the Regiment, the anniversary of an action fought a hundred and fifty years before. The day on which the achievement of past generations was remembered, of recognition that the history of a regiment is its Life. It was a holiday, but busy enough, since in the morning there was (not too early) a memorial parade in full strength, in the afternoon a sports meeting, and in the evening a special meal and extra sociability all round. Bhola Ram had seen eight of these by now, but this he knew was different.

For in the cold, keen air of morning, while in the barrack rooms and round the square the last polish was being dealt out to boots and harness, the last buckles fastened, the last side-arms hung just so, rumour was afloat. Rumour of trouble in the North, that the regiment was about to move.

So as they took their places for their salute to the Colour on which past battles are inscribed, in undertones word passed of those to come.

During the day what was launched as a possibility gathered way as a conviction. The officers, of course, did not know. They never did know anything about a move till the men told them. But during the evening celebrations they were told, and the experienced ones among them believed it.

There seemed on the surface of the morrow no difference between that day and any other. There was the usual coming and going to the call of the usual routine. The guard mounted, a company marched out to the range, a party cleaned their weapons in a corner, a larger one stood round a landscape target admiring the view. In the school the latest-joined recruits examined the mystery of magnetic north with hopeful persistence. Some stores were checked. In the office a clerk typed an inaccurate return.

But there was an air of suspense. Old soldiers made quiet last-minute arrangements, or started to write unaccustomed letters, with an air of finality. Young officers wondered whether it were true.

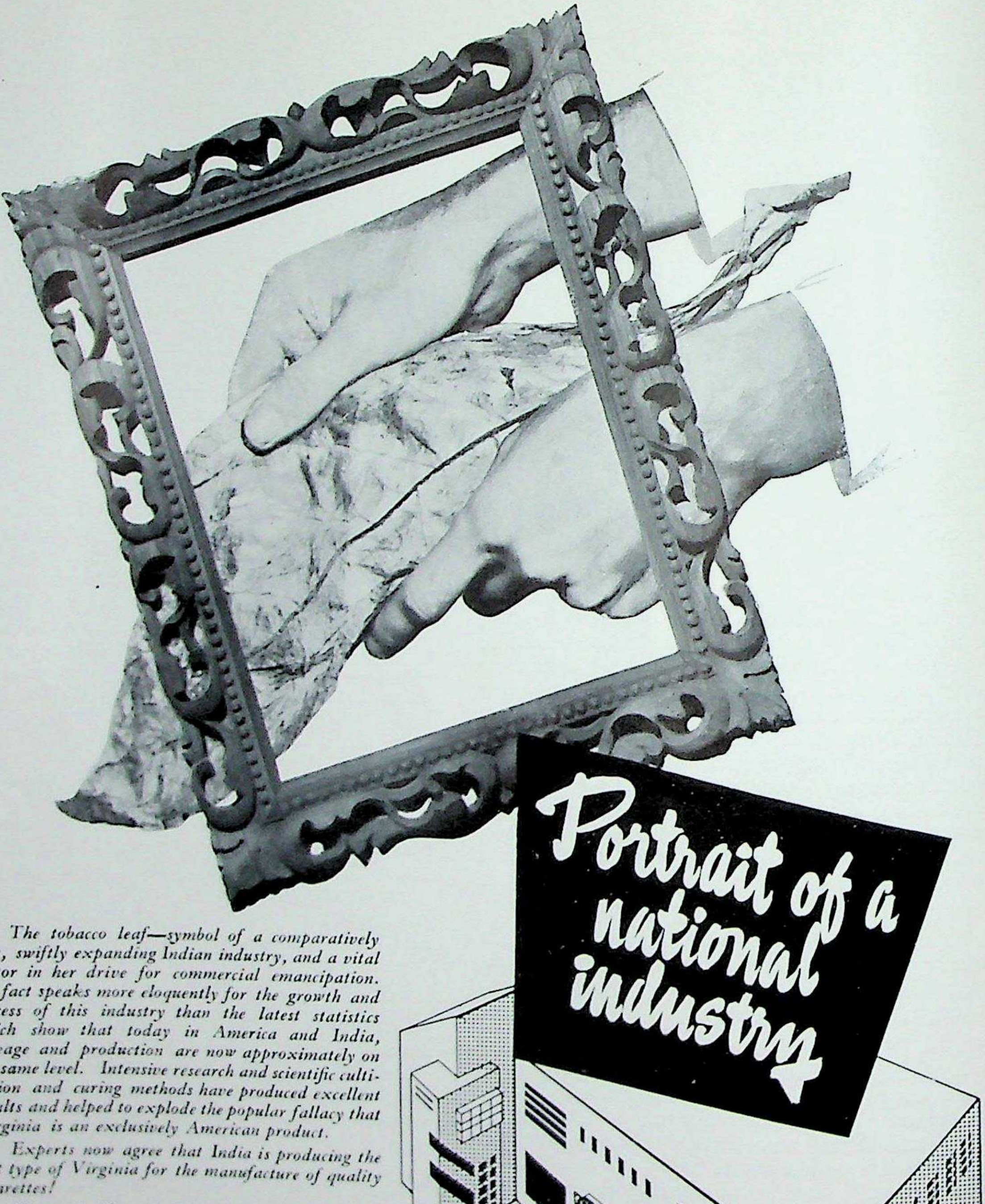
On the morning of the second day, the orders came.

Then the aspect of things changed. Routine gave way to urgency, and a steady occupation for most became activity for all. Quite gentle souls suddenly began to bustle. Arms were looked over. Stores were issued, and other stores called in. There was a good deal of hammering. Everyone had something to do, and no time to worry about what anyone else was doing, until in the evening after two more days, quiet descended. Not the peace of the day's work ended, but the silence of anticipation. The regiment was ready to move.

A day of waiting, and a train was ready. Into it they assorted themselves, Bhola Ram among them, to begin a slow and chilly journey across the cold northern plains. Four days of it, a two-hour halt in the morning, and another in the evening, while they cooked and ate. A crawl with many stops, ended to face around them line after line of war-worn lorries, and above them the dark green hills, and above them again, dull in a dim, distant, storm-swept sky, the snows.

Soon they were on the move again, crowded into an endless snake of lorries which wriggled its way around the spurs, into the re-entrants and through the mountain defiles, feeling its way ever upwards to its goal. It was a slow progress. The over-heating engines had to conquer the treachery of a worn-out surface, the narrowness of a path brought constantly to danger point by collapsing walls, the snowdrifts which ever and again formed faster than they could be cleared. Bhola Ram hung stolidly to his seat, from where he could look down, as often as not, straight into an abyss, or over his shoulder at a sagging crag which threatened at any moment to roar down on to the road to sweep away for thousands of feet whatever might chance to be in its path. Not that that worried Bhola. He felt only the cold, and perhaps that vague suspension which hangs over the mind towards the close of a journey.

They arrived at last, and tried to make themselves comfortable on the slopes of the valley till the morning should bring its decision. They were in familiar surroundings. Here and there were groups of tents, centres of larger clusters of bivouacs. An occasional tattered flag flapped its identity in the wind. Coated orderlies trudged to and fro. In the background a village—it looked as if it had been destroyed.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Once more Bhola set forth, after an uneasy night, on a seven-day campaign. Once more for six days he followed the sounds of battle, which passed him by. Before, he had fought his way through undergrowth in the heat. Now he struggled up summitless hills against a gale. Instead of tearing the clinging foliage from his face, now he had to wrest his feet from the clutch of snow. The common factor, ceaseless vigilance, remained.

Now it chanced that on the morning of the seventh day Bhola was standing by while his officer was receiving his orders. He did not fully understand them, but he did hear, " Remember that hill 291 is the key to our advance on the right, and *must* be held." Bhola did not at the time realise which hill 291 was. But when he was on it, and looked around him, then he knew . . . and the phrase he had heard stuck in his mind.

It was at five in the morning they began their climb, when the false dawn shewed, and past seven in the full light of day when they finished it. Bhola was no tactician, but even he could see the idea. A party in and around that bad cluster of rocks down and forward. Another party covering it from the nullah below on the left. A third (including Bhola) on the edge of the plateau to the right. Every bit of the ground tumbled with boulders and scored with intersections. False crest after false crest as far as the eye could see and instinct tell. And nothing one could do about it.

So *this* was what *had* to be held !

Some five hundred feet below, on the next presentable position, but parted from them by a steep and deeper nullah, was another company, watching the other flank, the nearest help. And away across the main divide moved almost imperceptibly a sort of enormous grub, with a fan-shaped head, and feelers on either side, and this Bhola knew was the column whose movement depended on the holding of 291.

Not only Bhola knew. By nine o'clock they were in action, by ten o'clock in heavy fighting.

The hours that followed were the tale of fighting for time against odds. The success of the main advance depended on hill 291, which itself was safe if the main advance was successful. But by mid-day it was obvious that the enemy, cautious enough, was gaining ground. Bhola Ram was losing impressions by now. He knew that one by one the men in his post had fallen. He remembered that what seemed hours ago four strange — they seemed strange, though he knew them well — men had come into his post and taken up the fight with him. Later, it must have been well into the afternoon, he looked dazedly down the slope behind him, to see the scattered bodies of his officer and some others . . . he supposed they must have been coming to his post . . . these four must have got through . . .

He was thirsty, but did not know it. He was exhausted, and did not know it. What was clear in his mind was that the enemy, working from cover to cover under each others' fire, were getting closer and closer; he was firing at much shorter range now. He realised dimly that he was alone again, and that the whacking of the bullets on the boulders in front of him, and the cracking of them past and over him, had become like a snarl in his face. He raised his head, and looked wearily around . . .

Then he was hit. He grunted, and almost grinned as he knew that the bullet had found the same target as the sword . . .

Suddenly he felt acutely alone, and the knowledge cleared his mind for what was to follow. Light shone on his weariness, and he knew with certain clarity that in minutes, perhaps seconds, he would be over-run. He looked down, —it seemed to him that the company far below was on the move. He looked over to the forward post. The absence of all movement told him that no soldier there was left alive. Suddenly he saw the light. He saw that he could hold on no longer here, but he could hold on there, if he could get there.

He was up and away before the thought had time to finish. Stumbling over the rocks, trying not to run straight, he defeated the stream of lead that hunted him . . .

A hundred yards or more he ran to get to his new position, to fall behind a rock and open fire on the position he had left. And as he did so, he was hit again.

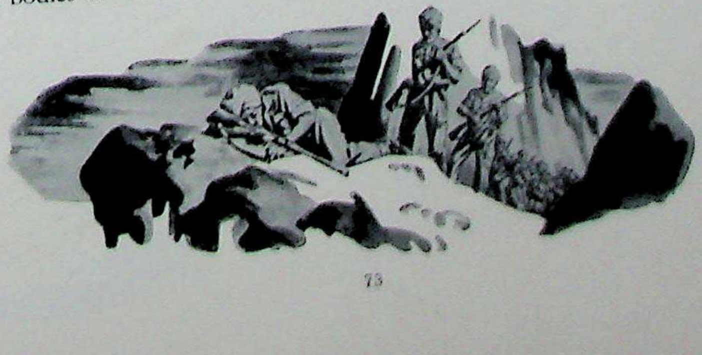
Then Bhola Ram, alone, continued to hold 291. Slowly, painfully, deliberately he fed a round into the breach of his rifle, adjusted his sights, looked for an enemy, or the sign of one, took aim, and fired.

Then another . . . and, as the mist was beginning to close around him, another . . . and another . . .

Panting, sweating through the cold, the reserve company strained its way with slow desperation towards the summit. A hundred men who listened, as they forced their feet ever upwards, to those occasional shots they recognised as their own, who knew as they climbed that some-one still resisted . . . that if they could get there in time . . . in time . . .

A hundred men whose minds waited at each leaden step for the bullets which would tell them that the enemy had occupied the hill . . . who knew more and more certainly as they scrambled over the last few yards, that the position was theirs . . .

There they found him, his hand on his open bolt, his cartridge cases scattered by his side. Bhola Ram had saluted the Colour for the last time.



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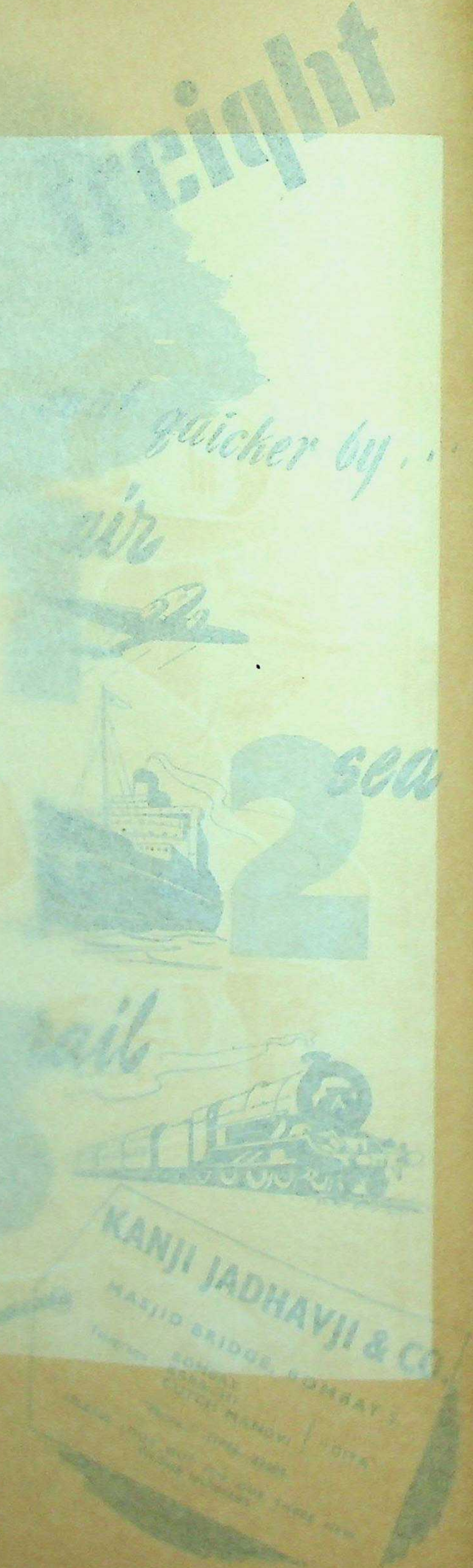
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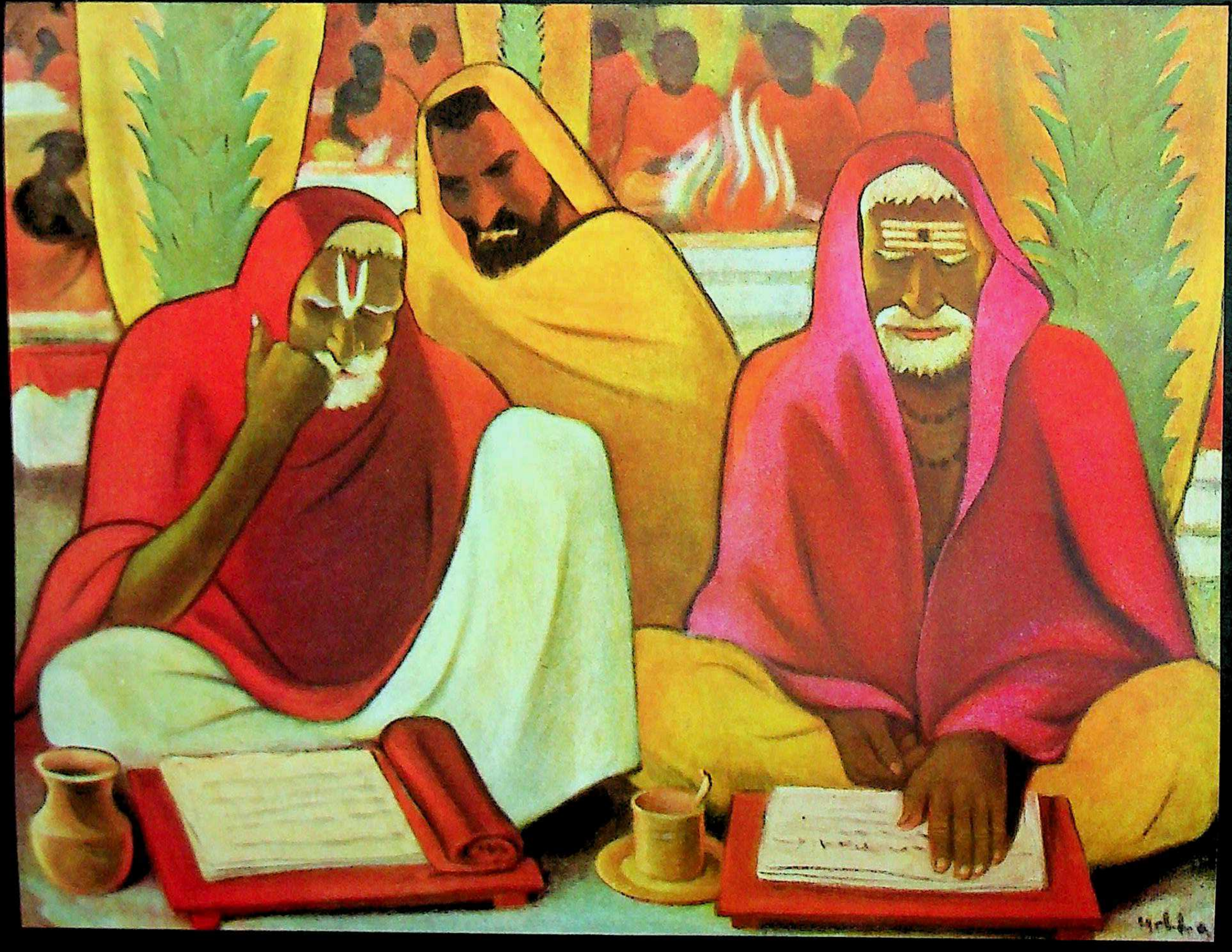

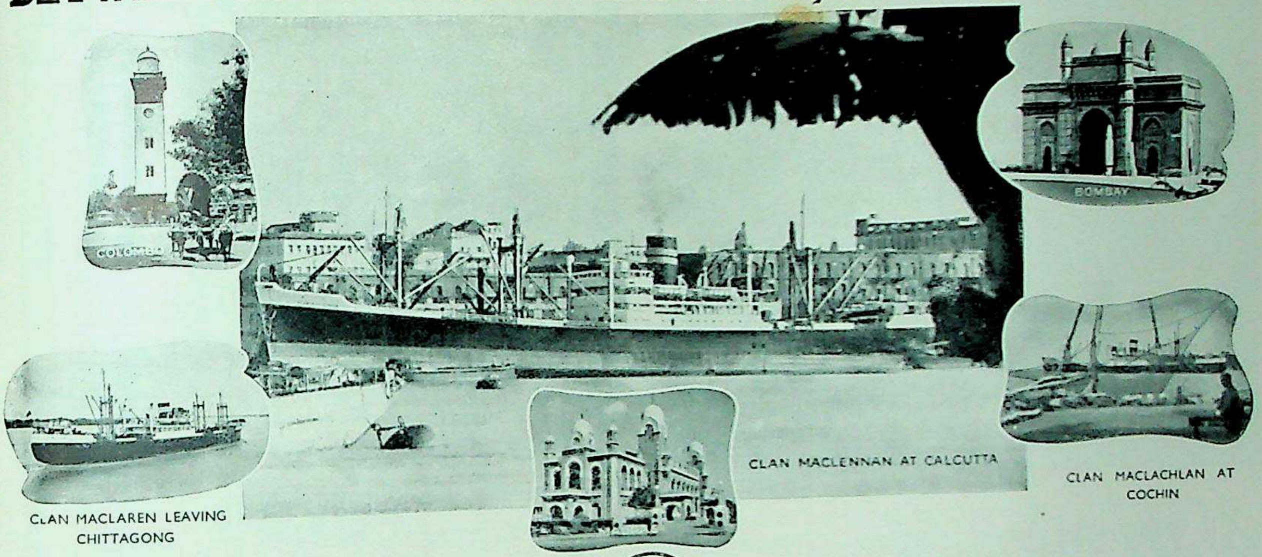

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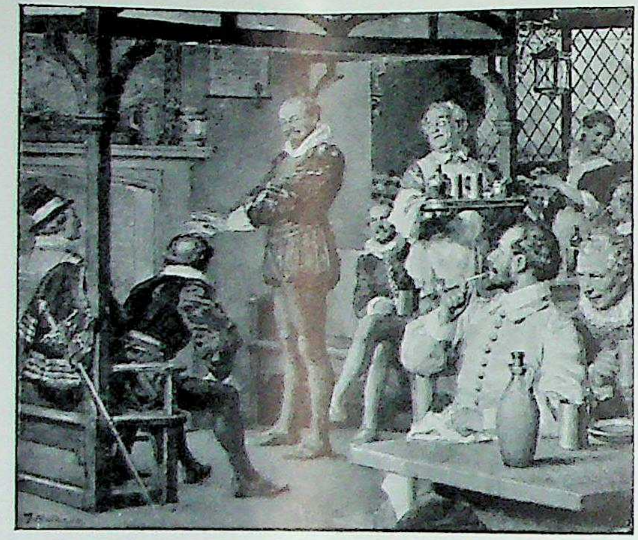

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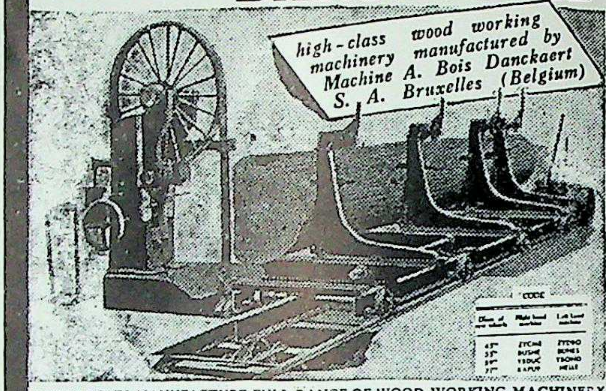

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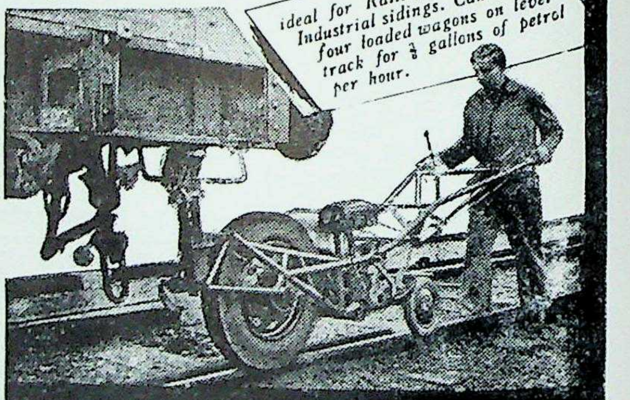

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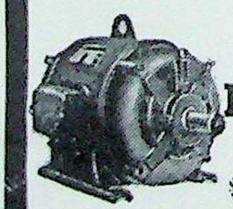

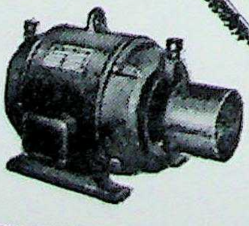

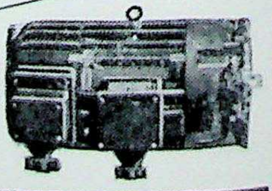

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It was still the custom then for units of the Indian Army to repair and build, if need be, their own lines. The men's barracks, or huts as they really were, were of primitive pattern with rough beams and rafters to support the tiled roofs, no ceilings or ceiling cloths, floors of beaten mud plastered with cowdung and chopped straw, windows without glass and no lights other than the then ubiquitous oil-burning hurricane lamp. The buildings were reasonably cool and weather-proof, however, and had good deep verandahs on either side of them. The lack of proper lighting did not matter a great deal as very few of the men could read or write. On the whole the men were probably housed as well as or better than in their own homes and their surroundings were certainly more hygienic than in the villages whence they came. When compared, however, with the elaborate arrangements made for their comfort and well-being today, conditions then were certainly exceedingly primitive. All the same, I believe the men were happy and loved their life in the Army and I have no doubt myself that the close, friendly and informal relationship that existed between them and their British Officers largely contributed to their contentment.

* * *

In those days, an Indian infantry battalion had eight companies, each about one hundred strong and commanded by a Subadar. Two of these companies made what was called a "double company," commanded by a British Major or Captain, known as the "Double Company Commander." Each Company was divided into four "sections" of twenty-five men each commanded by a Havildar or Sergeant. There was no organised battalion headquarters, which consisted of the commanding officer, the adjutant and the quartermaster, assisted by the Subadar-Major, the Jemadar-Adjutant and a clerk or two. There was no such thing as an "administrative" company or "wing" in those days: administration was a very simple business and paper-work was kept to a minimum. When, later, I was made Adjutant of the battalion, I do not think my office work ever exceeded a couple of hours per day which was just as well as we had to train all our own recruits. There was no regimental training centre to do this for us. In addition to training our recruits we had to enlist them also, sending out regimental recruiting parties for the purpose when necessary. Generally, however, we had enough "umeedwars" presenting themselves at battalion headquarters to meet our needs.

Training in those days was a very simple business compared with what it is today. In the infantry we had two weapons only—the rifle and the bayonet. True, the British and Indian Officers were armed with revolvers, but no one thought much of the revolver as a weapon. In fact, it was rather looked on as a somewhat dangerous toy and the annual revolver firing "course" was regarded as a boring affair, to be got over and then forgotten!

Machine guns, light automatics, mortars, tommy guns, mines, flares and such like adjuncts of modern war were unknown to us.

With such a simplicity of weapons, training for war was not really difficult or complicated, as it undoubtedly is to-day. Nevertheless, it took a great deal of time and patience to train the individual sepoy to reach the very high standard of marksmanship with the rifle, up to ranges of one thousand yards, demanded of the infantry soldier of those days. Our rifle shooting practice was done always in the hottest of the hot weather and many and long were the hours we spent on the ranges trying to improve the shooting average of the regiment, and to prove that we were "fit for service"!

Bayonet fighting, too, took up a good deal of our working time. We practised this most vigorously and with not a little roughness! The men were equipped with spring bayonets with padded points, fencing masks to protect their faces and heads and padded body armour as well. This certainly bred an offensive spirit in our young soldiers and taught them to take hard knocks and yet keep their tempers, though I must admit that our inter-company bayonet fighting contests sometimes ended in free fights, so keen was the team spirit.

Other training was equally simple compared with what the modern soldier has to be taught before he can be considered fit to go into battle. The infantry, whether attacking or defending, was always distributed in three bodies, namely, the "firing line", the "supports" and the "reserves."

In the course of an attack on a position held by the "enemy", when the firing line was adjudged to be unable to advance further, because of the losses supposed to be caused to it by the fire of the "enemy", it halted, took what cover it could find on the spot and itself opened fire on the "enemy" position or on what it thought might be the "enemy" position. It was then reinforced continuously by the successive lines or "waves" of the "supports" and "reserves" until a solid line of men, shoulder to shoulder, all firing furiously at the enemy position, had been built up. The "rapid fire" of those days meant fifteen aimed rounds a minute and this was demanded and generally obtained, too, from each trained infantry soldier. The accuracy and rapidity of the rifle fire of our soldiers came as a great surprise and a great shock to the Germans in Belgium in 1914, but this high standard was only reached by dint of hard and patient training spread over many years. Once this solid "firing line" had been built up the fire fight continued until it was considered that the volume and accuracy of the attackers' fire had so subdued the "enemy's" fire as to make an assault on his position possible. The commanding officer then ordered the "charge" to be blown on the bugle and the whole battalion would rise as one man and, led by the officers waving their swords, assault the "enemy" with fixed bayonets. The "enemy", knowing the right thing to do, would then hastily retire to a new position in the rear and the attackers would sort themselves out so as to be able to repeat the process if necessary! In the light of what happened in the war of 1914-18 which was soon to follow, it was not, perhaps, very realistic training, but our men could certainly shoot and could certainly use the bayonet. They had confidence in their weapons, simple as these were, and that goes for a great deal in battle.

The sepoy of forty or fifty years ago lived simply. He got about nine rupees a month on joining the Army and he had to pay for his own food. There were no free rations in those days, though there was an allowance called "compensation for dearness of provisions." This allowance varied, so far as I can remember, between three and five rupees a month according to the part of India in which the soldier happened to be serving.

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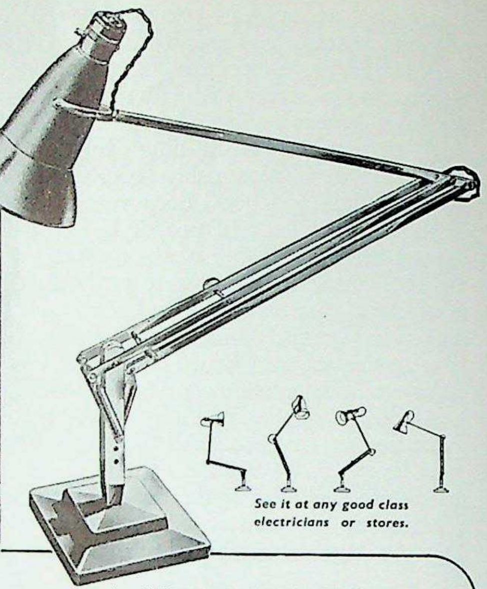

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This allowance was generally pooled by companies and the staple articles of the ration, like "atta", "gur" and "ghi" were purchased by the company in bulk from the regimental "Bania", who was in those days a very important and firmly established institution.

These basic rations were supplemented by the men from their own resources and the Indian officers—the Subadars and Jemadars—had often to keep an eye on men who showed a tendency to avoid spending enough on food to keep themselves hard and fit. There were regimental and company funds which could be drawn upon to give special diet, such as milk, to young and growing boys. Meat was a luxury to be tasted only on rare occasions, such as feast days and special holidays. Deer and blackbuck shot by the sporting subaltern sometimes made a welcome addition to the men's ration!

The men also had, to some extent, to pay for their uniform. When he enlisted, the young recruit got an outfit allowance towards the initial cost of his clothing and, thereafter, a monthly sum for its upkeep called a "half-mounting allowance," a term which went back to the days when the cost of equipping and clothing the soldier was shared between him and the "Sirkar" or government. A similar arrangement called the "silladar" system existed in the Indian cavalry in which the "sowar", or trooper, provided his own horse and arms on joining the Army. The result of this complicated business was that the young soldier generally started with a debit balance in his clothing account, but, as time went on, he was able, if he was careful, to build up a credit for himself against the day when he retired from service and went back to his village. All the men's uniform, except their full dress blouses and pantaloons and their great coats, which were government property were made up by the regimental "durzee" or tailor. The khaki drill cloth, puggaree cloth, putties, socks and so on were all bought directly from civilian firms by the Quarter-Master acting for the Commanding Officer. These transactions were of course subject to strict audit, but the system had its roots in the days when it was accepted that a commanding officer should make a handsome profit for himself out of the business of fitting out and clothing his men!

In the days of which I am speaking, a commanding officer had a lot of latitude as to the pattern and cut of the khaki uniform to be worn by the men of his unit. As a result of this, no two units of the Indian Army were dressed alike, though there was, of course, a general resemblance imposed by custom and by Army Headquarters. Patterns of the blouses, pantaloons, putties and puggarees varied a great deal in different units and there was no big central organisation for the supply of clothing as there is to-day. Badges and buttons, those sacred tokens of the soldier, were, however, as closely regulated then as they are now!

The British Officer's dress of those days was as rigidly laid down as it is to-day, allowing for certain recognised individual regimental idiosyncracies. In the height of the hot weather as well as in the depth of winter, we were also expected to wear our starched khaki jackets, riding breeches and leggings and a stiff double white collar with white shirt and black silk tie. It is true that on afternoon parades and on the rifle range, the men were often allowed, for their greater comfort and to save their pockets, to wear their own national dress; when this happened, the British Officer was allowed to wear mufti too. At dinner in mess, even in the hottest weather, we wore stiff white shirts and stiff stand up collars. No bush shirts or "shirt sleeves" for the officer of those days! I remember an exceptionally daring officer being ordered out of the breakfast room, because he ventured to appear in his khaki shirt with rolled up sleeves, the temperature being 105 degrees in the shade!

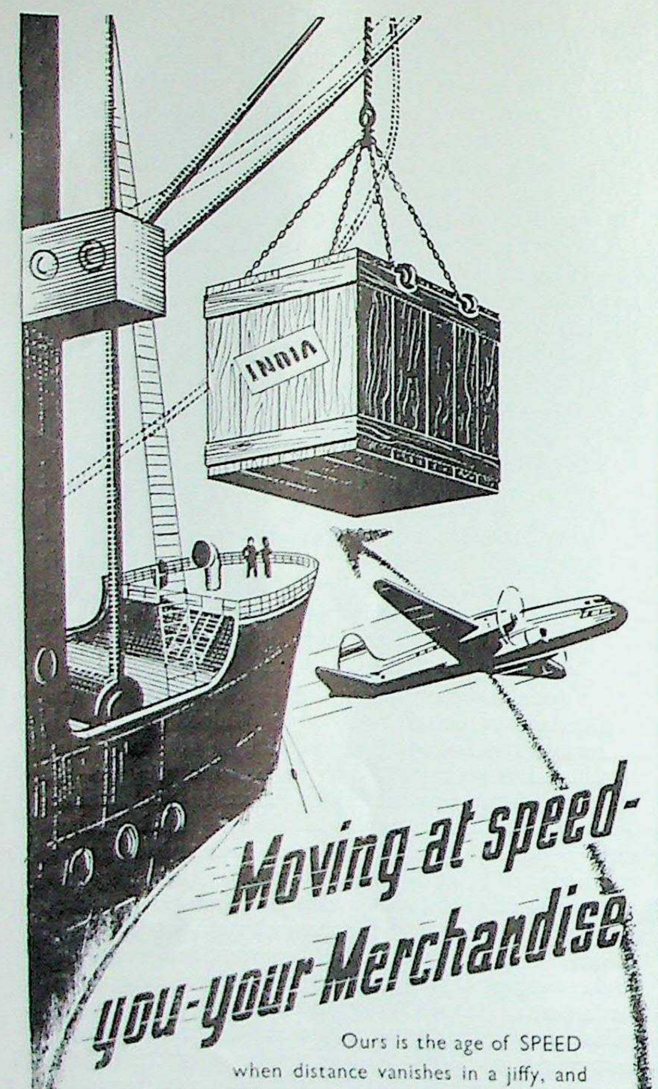
Helmets, or topis, of course we always wore—in fact it was a disciplinary offence to be out in the heat of the day without one. That myth was exploded for good and all in the last great war and now no one, or hardly any one, wears a helmet in India to-day—at least not in the Army! In addition to having to wear a heavy helmet, the unfortunate British Officers and soldiers were, at one time, made to wear a quilted spine pad and a quilted flap attached to the rear of the helmet to guard them against "sunstroke." The usual result was to make them much hotter than they would otherwise have been and more prone to heat exhaustion, which is the real danger in great heat. To-day we are encouraged to expose as much of our skin to the sun as we can within the limits imposed by decency! The wheel has come full circle with a vengeance!

Education was practically non-existent in the Indian Army of forty-five years ago. Indeed, the would-be recruit who had even a smattering of education and could read or write just a little in his own tongue—we had three distinct scripts and four dialects in our battalion—was looked on almost with suspicion! In those days each regiment or battalion had a lengthy list of "umeedwars" or "young hopefuls" wishing to become soldiers and serve with their brothers, uncles, cousins and friends from the same village. Competition to serve in the army was very keen then and when one of these aspirants was called to regimental headquarters for inspection, the first thing we looked at were the palms of his hands. If these were hard and calloused by work in the fields, the boy was over his first obstacle. If his hands were soft, searching enquiry was made into his antecedents. No town-bred "softie" need apply! A knowledge of English, however slight, was enough to cause the luckless "umeedwar" to be classed as a "babu", fit only for the regimental office, inhabited by a few despised literates! We take a very different view of these matters to-day!

I must say, however, that we did do our best to encourage our men, once they had joined the regiment, to learn how to read and write and so to qualify themselves for promotion, but there was no compulsion; if the man wished to learn he was taught, if not, he remained illiterate till he took his discharge or went on pension. Many Indian officers, Subadars and Jemadars—and non-commissioned officers, Havildars and Naiks—could neither read nor write even in their own vernacular tongue and it was not till much later, that an educational test for promotion was introduced.

When I joined the 62nd Punjabis, the battalion quartermaster-havildar, who had charge of all stores and clothing, kept his tally of issues and receipts in charcoal strokes on the whitewashed wall of his store! A grand old white-bearded Sikh he was too, wearing the medals of the Egyptian war of 1882.

If the Indian soldier was not richly paid, the young British officer was not exactly wealthy either. I think my pay as a 2nd Lieutenant during my year with a British



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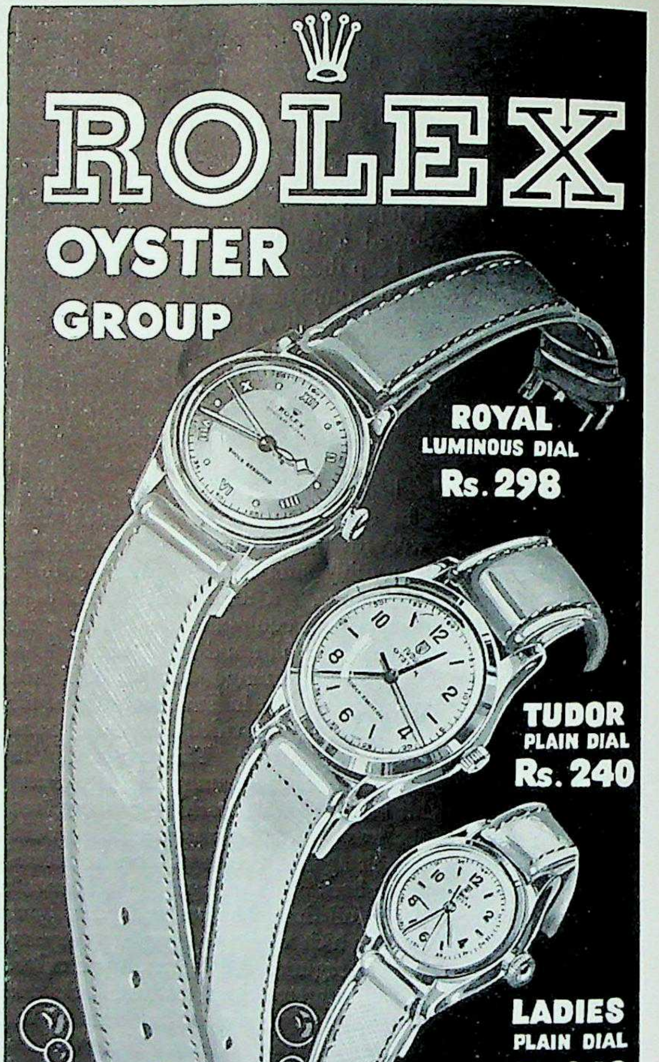

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regiment was about two hundred and eighty rupees a month which rose by one hundred rupees a month when I joined my Indian regiment. What is more, the young officer of that time got no outfit allowance from the Government. All our uniform, including the costly scarlet gold-laced full dress tunic and its gold laced belts, sword and accessories, as well as the cold weather cloth mess kit and all the numerous articles of khaki and white drill uniform had to be privately provided—usually of course by one's parents. Each of us had also to provide, at his own or his parents' expense, sword, revolver, field-glasses, compass, belts, water-bottle, haversack and so on. Moreover, in the Indian Army in which at that period all officers down to the junior subaltern were mounted on parade, we had to produce from our own resources a complete set of military saddlery in addition to a horse, or charger, which had to be approved by the commanding officer. So it is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that most of us started our military career in debt and that we had little money left over when our monthly mess bill and servants' wages had been paid. Servants' wages were, of course, ridiculously small compared with those paid today; eighteen rupees for a bearer-khidmatgar or "valet-waiter", ten rupees for a groom or "sais", eight rupees for the man who cut the daily ration of grass for one's charger and so on.

Such money as we did manage to save was mostly spent on shooting and sport when we got our month or two of leave in the summer.

It was not until I had served six years in India that I was able to take my first long leave to England. All the same, we had no grumbles or real complaints. We enjoyed life to the full, worked hard and played hard. We thought nothing of setting out in the dark of a very early winter's morning, seated on the bare boards of an "ekka" or two-wheeled country pony trap, and driving fifteen or twenty miles so as to be on the duck "jheel" at dawn. We would return in the same way after dark, tired but happy even if the bag was small.

* * *

If our tasks were simple, so were our amusements and comforts. No cinemas, no cocktail parties, no radio, no electric lights or fans and no motor-cars. We had all the more time to devote ourselves to our men and devote it to them we did.

On and off parade, in the Lines, on the playing fields and out shooting we spent a great deal of our time with them.

We often spent our short leaves of ten days or so with them in their villages, living in their houses or the village guest-house, eating their simple but excellent food and getting really to know them and their families.

No British Officer, worthy of the name, who has served with the soldiers of the old Indian Army, sharing their joys and sorrows, as I have been so proud and happy to do for so many years, can ever forget them or their loyalty, their charm or their matchless courage in battle.

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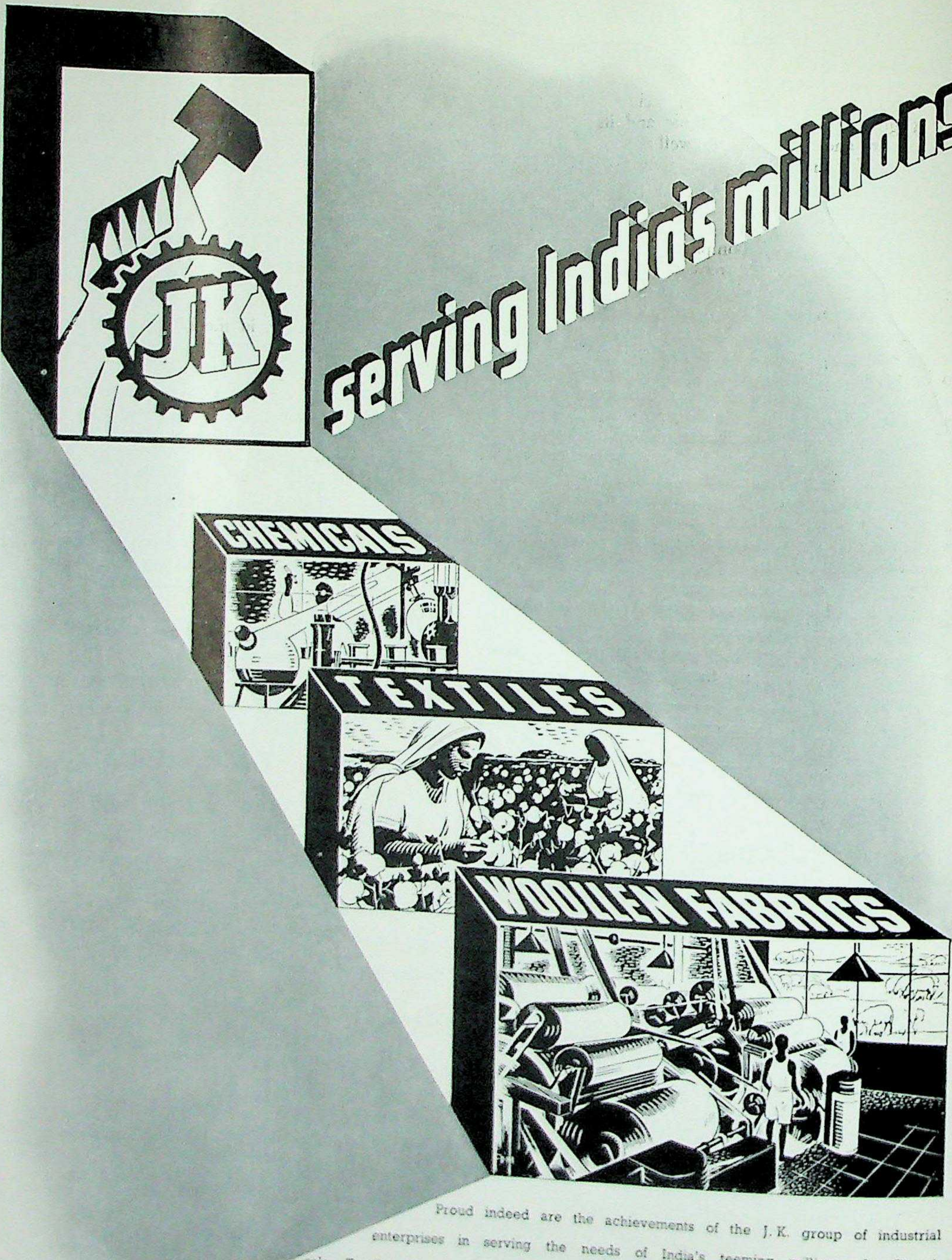
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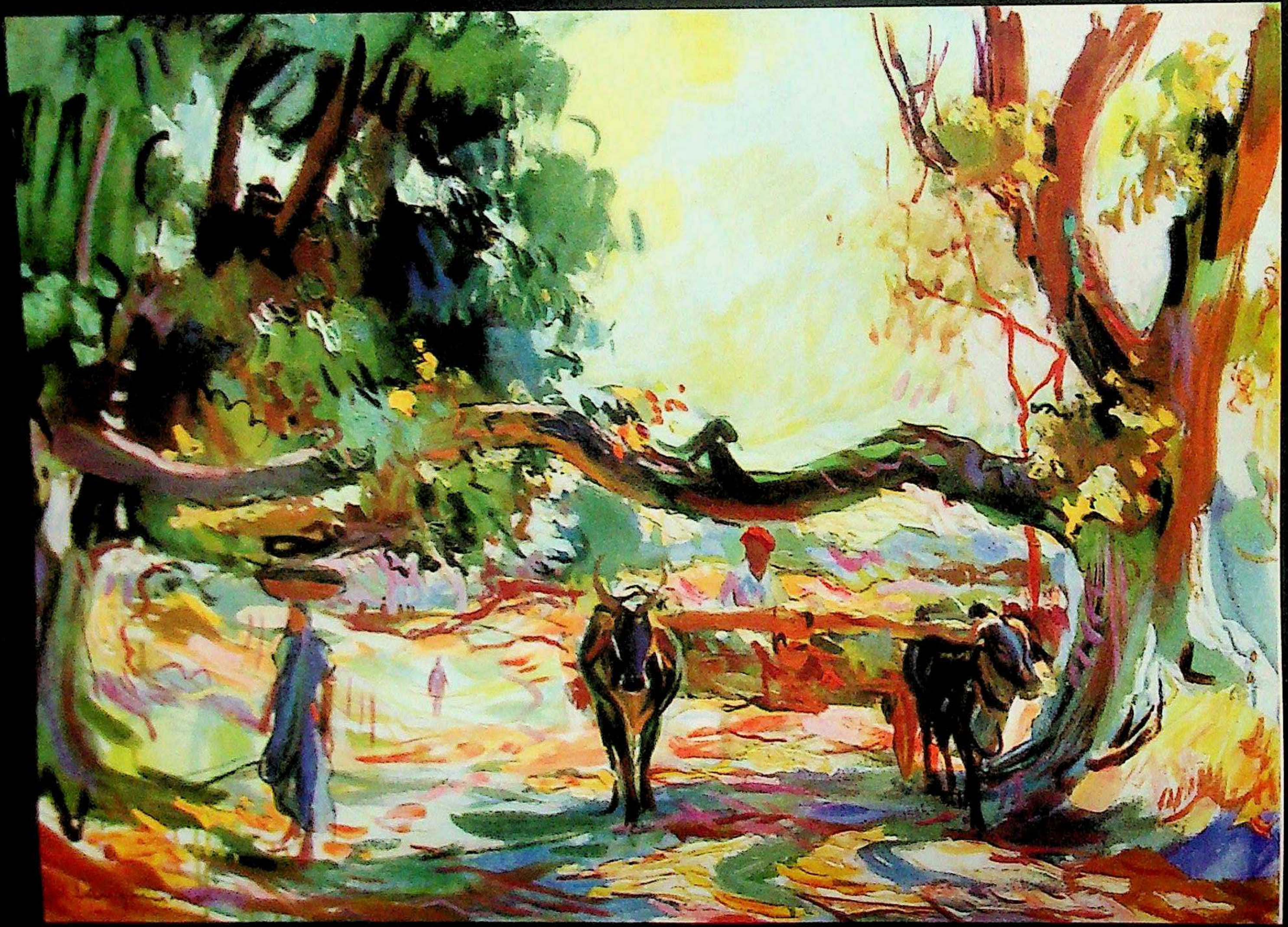

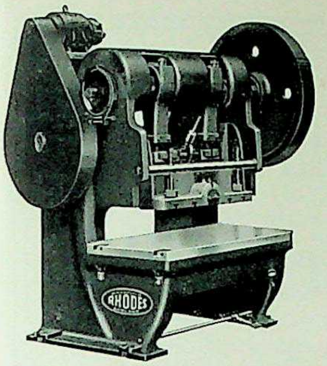

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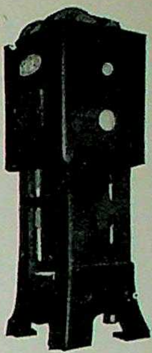

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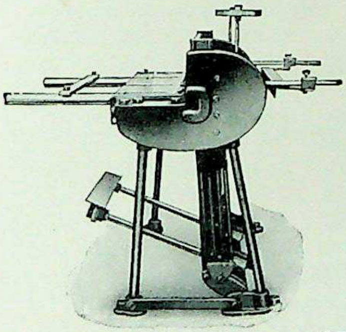

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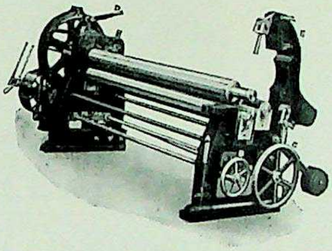

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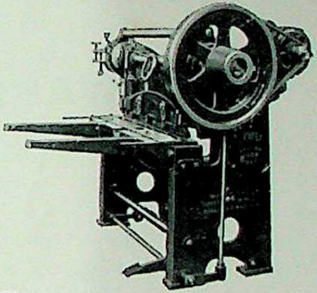

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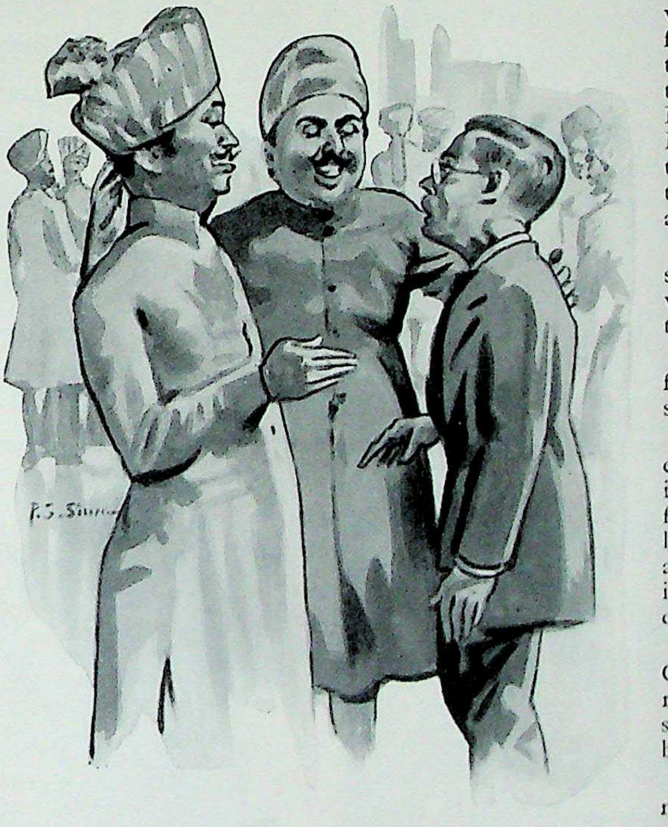
Wajid Mahmud, the Education Minister, and Prof. Ram Ratan Gupta....Mr. Gupta is our finance minister, here. He is a wizard. He can count anything at a moment's notice....Come along now....' And he slapped Subramaniam's back with such cordiality that the poor South Indian nearly broke into two.

Soon, however, Mr. Subramaniam found himself seated in a beautiful Dodge and being dodged away across intricate bazaars towards the cantonment and then through the magnificent portals of the Aliabad Club into the monumental palace which housed this august institution.

But while the drive was fairly diverting because the Nawab Sahib kept up a running commentary on the wonders of Aliabad, Mr. Subramaniam's small soul, brought up on an occasional shivering visit to the C.C.I., shuddered with the fear of the unknown on his entry into the hall and shrank into nothingness in the face of the grandees who were assembled here in silk robes and golden turbans and velvet shoes. When he was introduced to the various dignitaries and they rose to shake hands with him, the forefinger of his right hand with which he usually touched other people's hands, simply wilted like the falling petals of a dirty flower. One dignitary, Nawab Wajid Mahmud, took it upon himself to instruct Mr. Subramaniam in the art of shaking hands:

'You know, my friend,' this nobleman began, 'the handshake is the symbol of affection and good will. Let this love show itself with some warmth. When a person's hand clasps yours, give your full hand, with its real grip, and not the four miserable fingers....'



'.... give your full hand, with its real grip and not the four miserable fingers ....'

This overwhelmed Mr. Subramaniam, until he blushed, flushed and began to perspire profusely. And all he wanted was to be able to come to scratch, for there was no denying that this was life brimming over as it were, with warmth and hospitality. But his eyeglasses were blurred with the smoke of confusion and he was intensely relieved when he could sink back into a chair and contract into the littlest and most insignificant being on earth.

Nawab Luqman Ali Khan Sahib was much in demand. And for a while he went about meeting his friends. Meanwhile, the waiter who looked like a Nawab himself, brought a bottle of whisky and some tumblers and began to pour out the liquor.

Soon Nawab Luqman Ali brought the Home Minister and the Finance Minister around.

Mr. Subramaniam had tasted whisky twice or thrice and liked it, but his wife had smelt his breath and had given him a long lecture about how he was going to the dogs. Since then, he had found it easier to resist the temptation. But the whisky had already been poured and there was no avail against the persuasive tongue of the Nawab Sahib, his host, especially as the other noblemen added their pleas to his in a most gracious Hindustani speech. And then the samosas and akoras arrived, with lashings of podina pickle and the Southerner in Mr. Subramaniam felt the call of chillies.

And soon he was happy, happier than he had been for years, and those delicate negotiations for which he had been sent here, were obliterated by the fumes of alcohol and the seven course dinner to which Nawab Wajid Mahmud, the Education Minister, insisted on taking the company in the club dining-room after the appetisers.

Mr. Subramaniam slept soundly that night and was as good as dead to the world.

The next morning he felt the existence of a slight hangover.

When he had sufficiently recovered his senses it was about noon. He finished his previous day's letter to the Nawab Sahib and sent that in, requesting him to sign the documents.

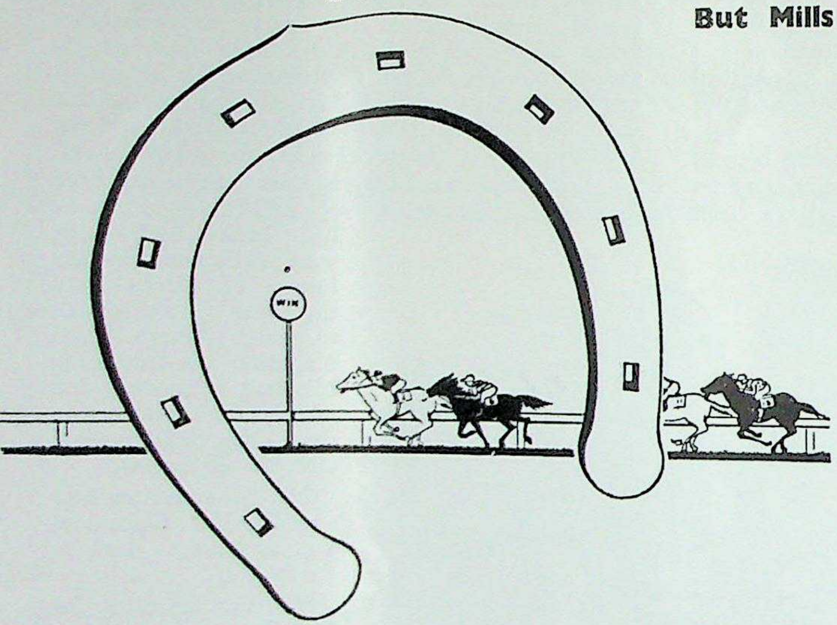
There was no answer. Only the Jemadar had returned to the hall and sat smoking the hubble bubble.

And when Mr. Subramaniam made so bold as to inquire about the papers, the Jemadar replied that the Nawab Sahib was still asleep, but that he was due to wake up soon, for there was to be a midday meal in honour of Mr. Subramaniam to which various friends of the Nawab Sahib were coming.

Mr. Subramaniam felt more frustrated than flattered on hearing this announcement. And then there was the residue of guilt in his callow soul about his fall the previous evening. So he began to pace up and down the verandah of the guest-house again and, fatigued by this useless occupation, he sat back in the arm-chair and tried to cultivate patience.

The warmth of the morning conduced to a light slumber and he only awoke when the Jemadar shook him and told him the meal was ready and the guests had arrived.

If Luck were dependable-



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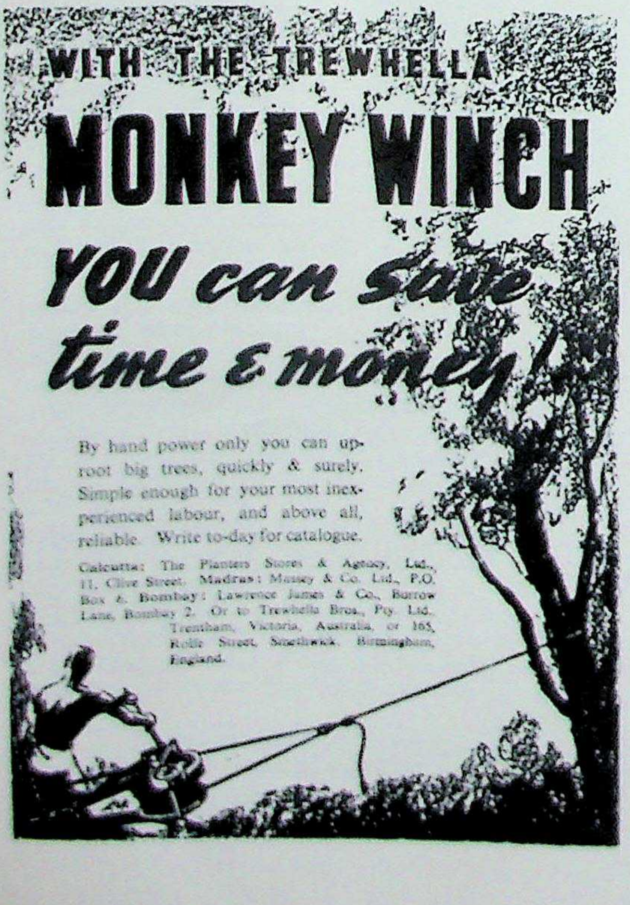

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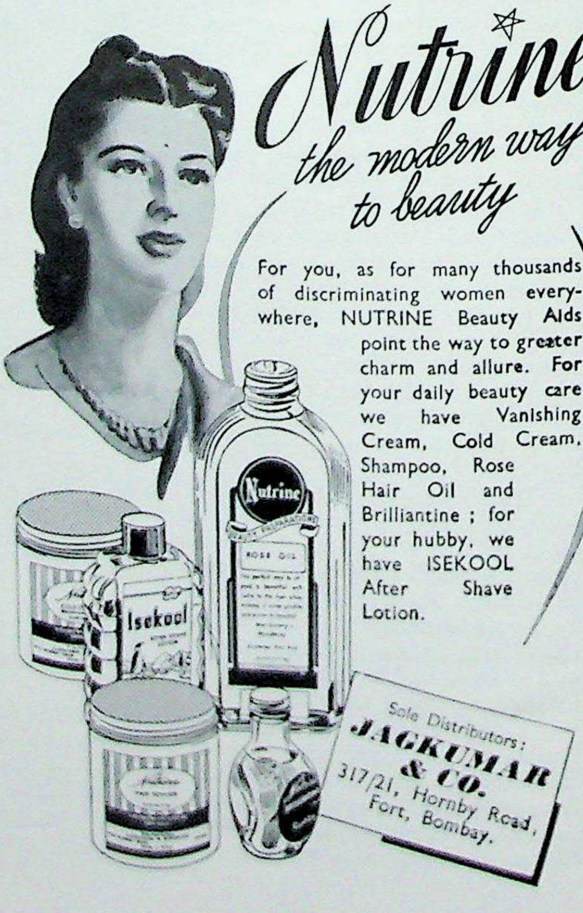

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So vociferously persuasive was the Nawab Sahib in imparting this information that Mr. Subramaniam could not put a word in edgeways. And, perforce, he went in and began to dress for dinner.

The dinner in Mr. Subramaniam's honour, given by Mr. Gupta, was as rich and sumptuous as the lunch given by Nawab Luqman Ali Khan, only the number of vegetable dishes exceeded the meat dishes. But the general nature of hospitality was the same, till Mr. Subramaniam began to recognise the unmistakable pattern of grace in Aliabad. There even followed the 'chain effect'. Nawab Haider Ali suggested that it was his turn to invite Mr. Subramaniam now and that he would be happy if the honoured guest and the rest of the company would come to the hunting lodge on his estate that very evening, for he had received a message from his shikaris to say that a tiger had eaten the goat tied near the machan and was likely to repeat its visit. The laws of Aliabad hospitality demanded an acceptance of this noble suggestion and the company got into cars and were off into the depths of the night illumined by a million stars.

The food and drink had broken the defences in Mr. Subramaniam's soul enough for him to lend himself to the seductions of this drive. Never before in his life had he tasted the delights of so novel an adventure as a tiger hunt. And, though he felt a slight hazard in this game, the fresh air and the impact of the dense forests through which they were passing made him forget everything and yield to a 'no care' attitude. As for those documents, how could one think of anything so obscene in the midst of this vast anonymity where nature seemed to cancel out all questions, especially banking.

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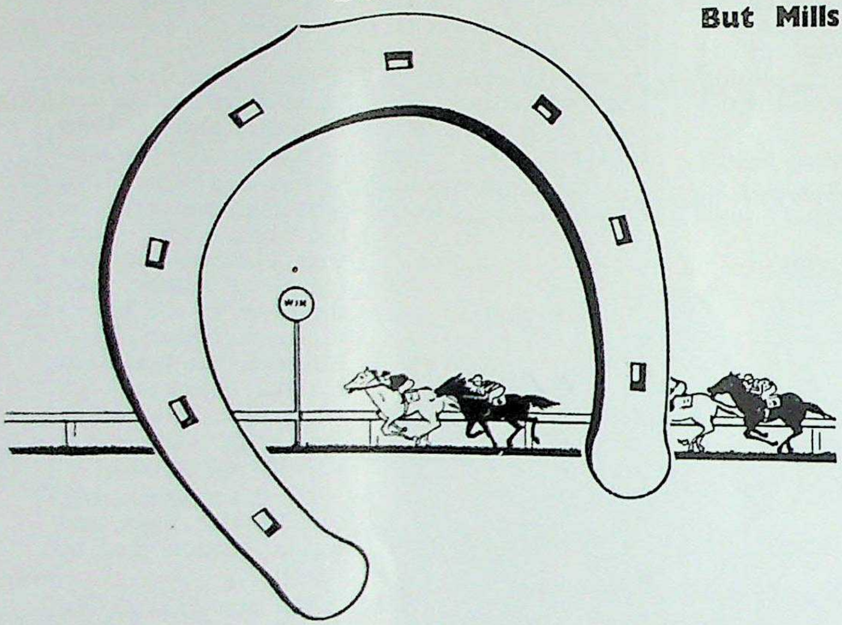

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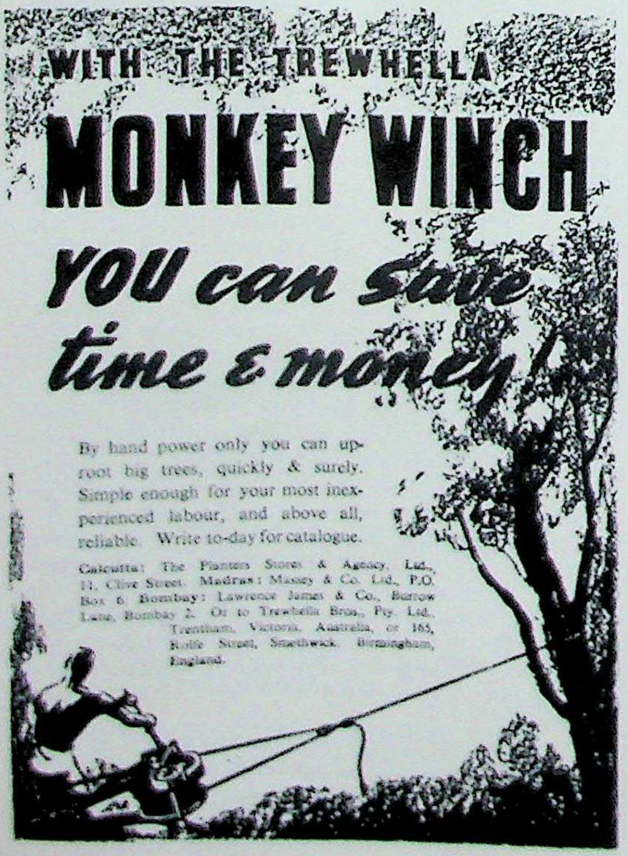

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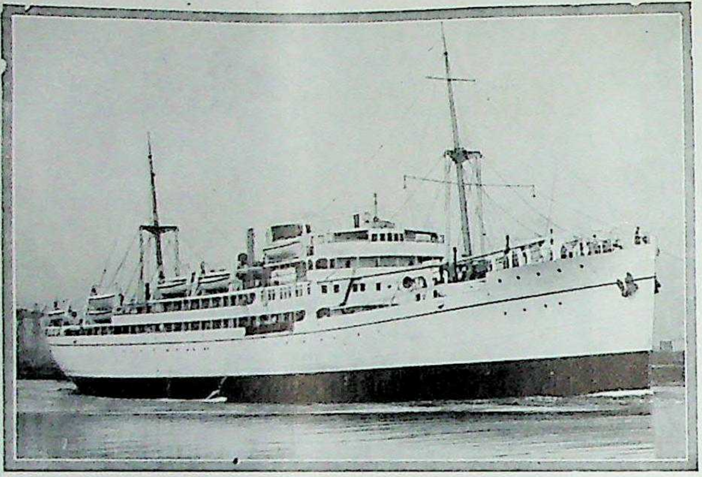

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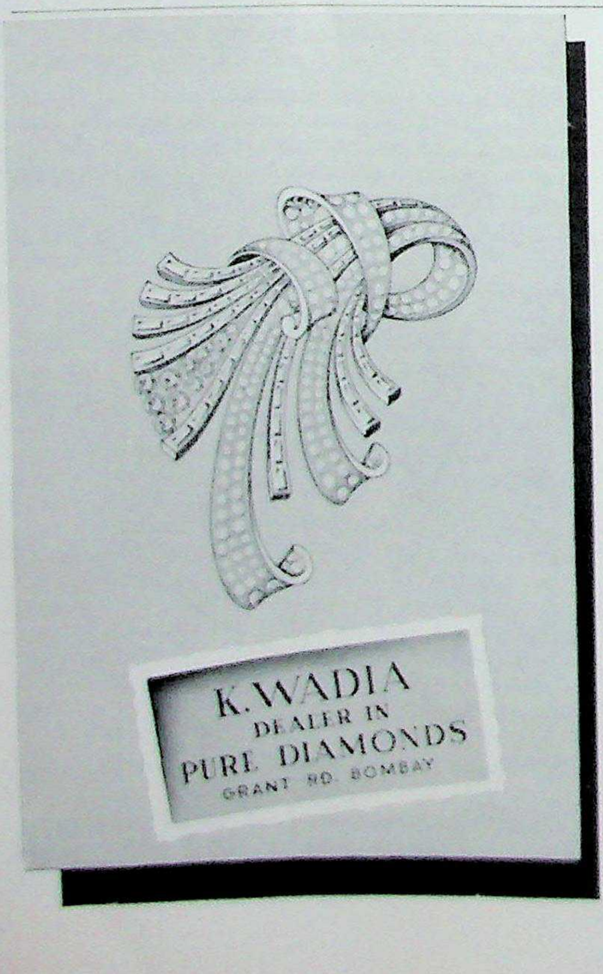

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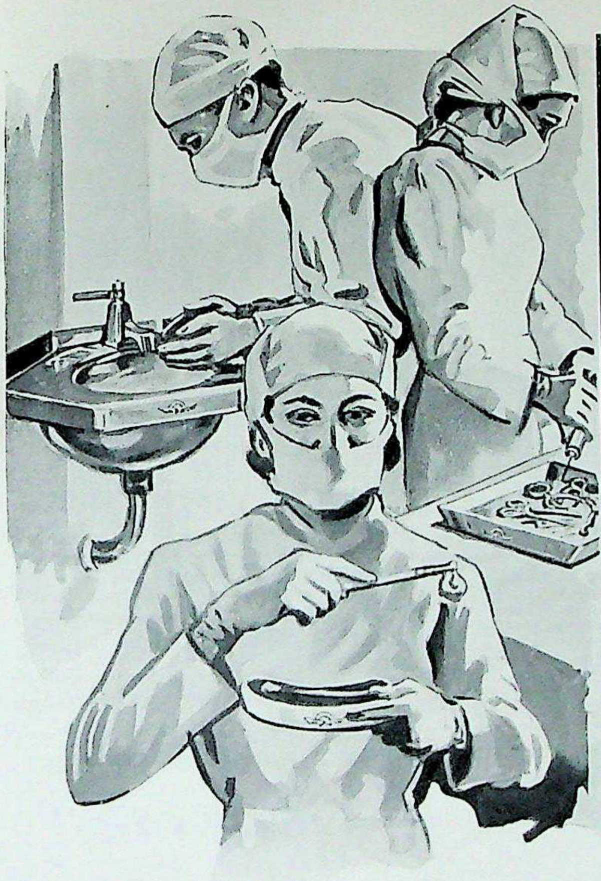

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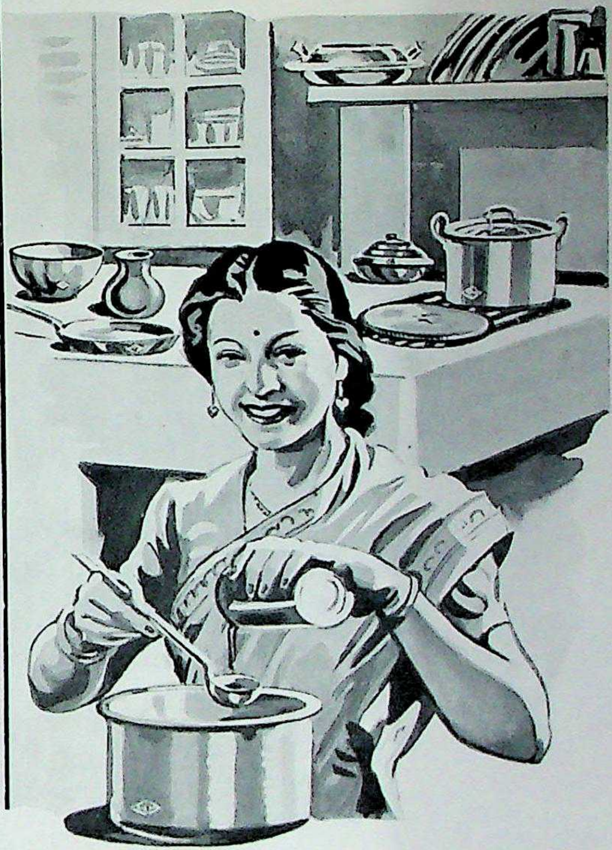

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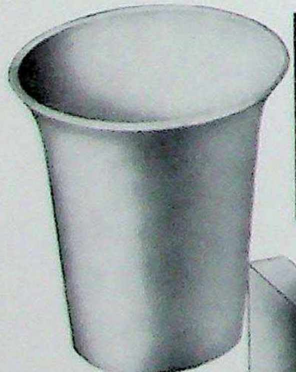

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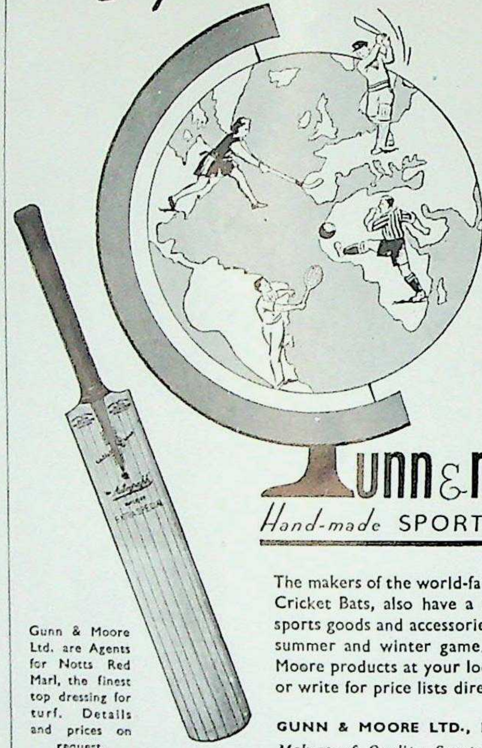

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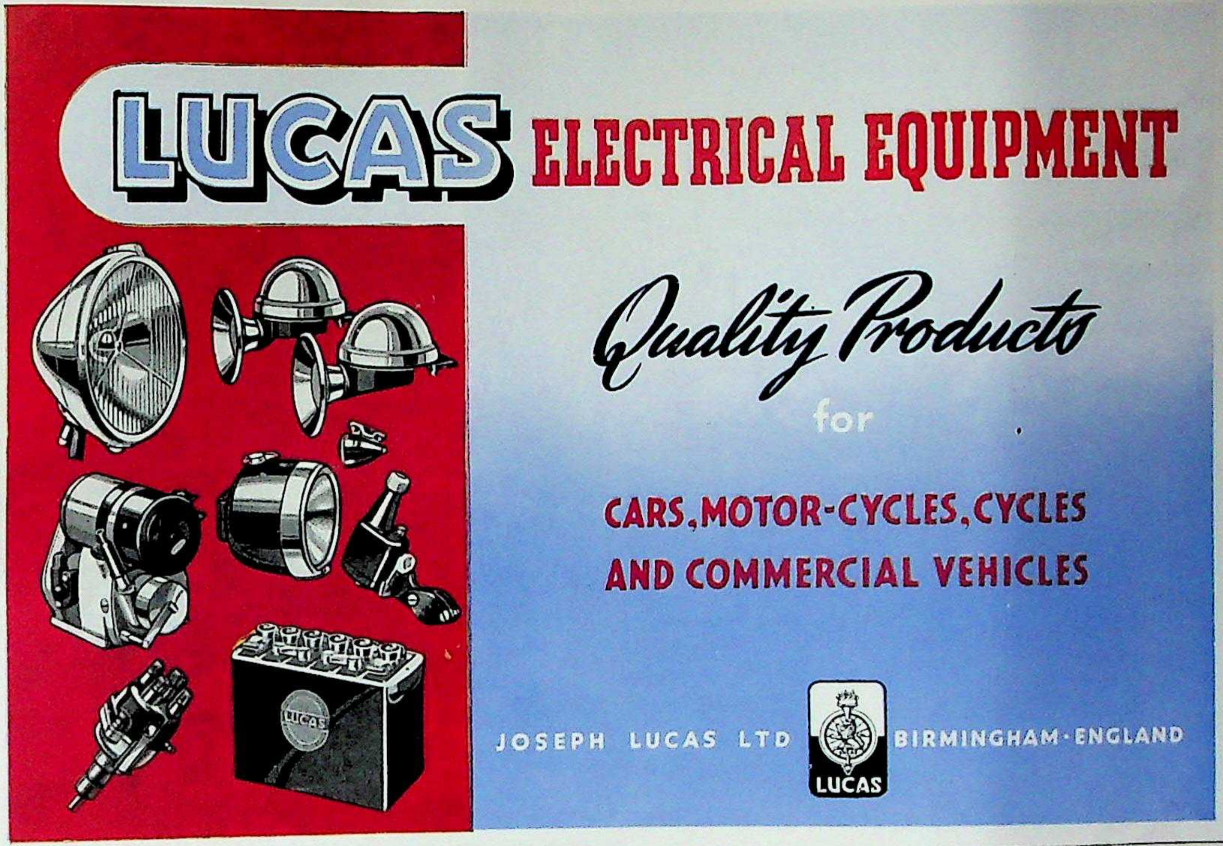

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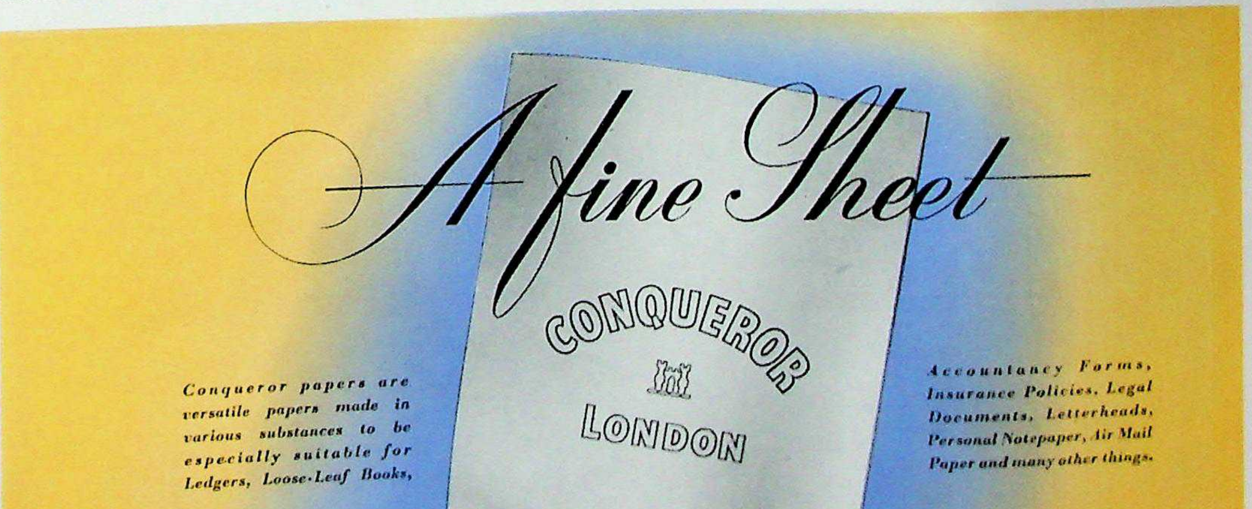

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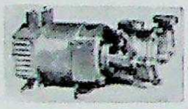

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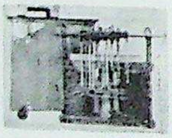

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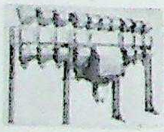

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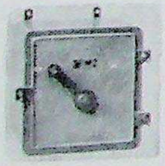

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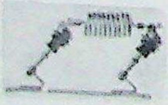

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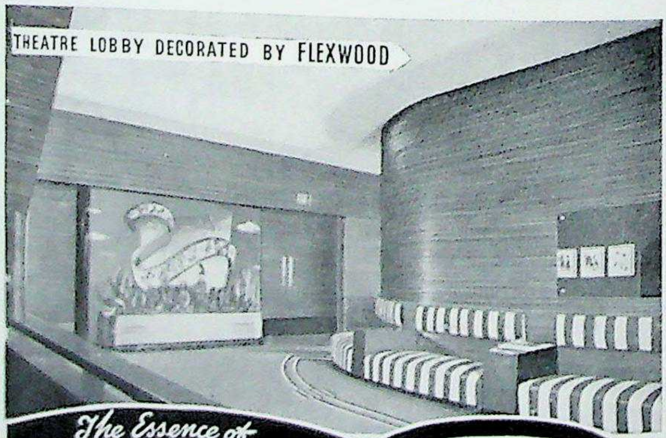

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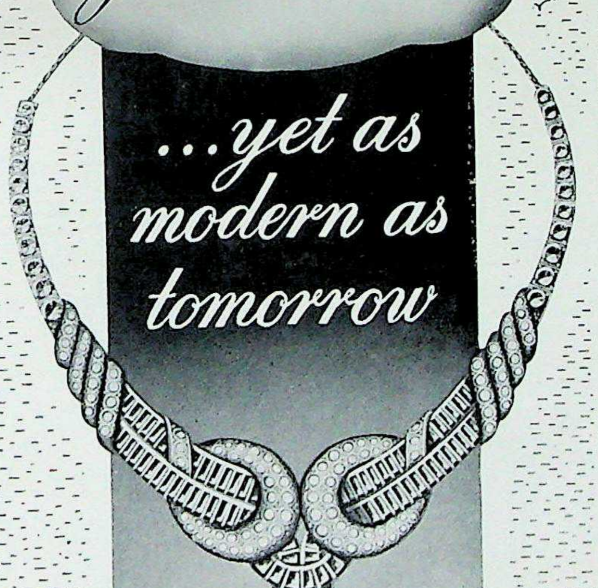

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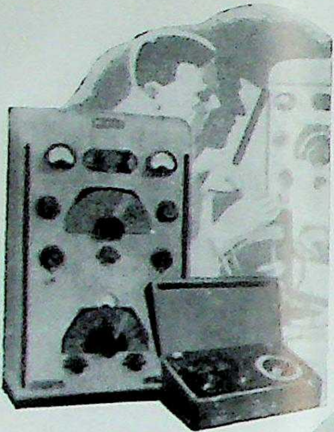

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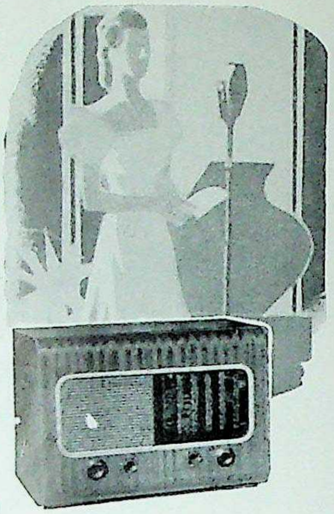

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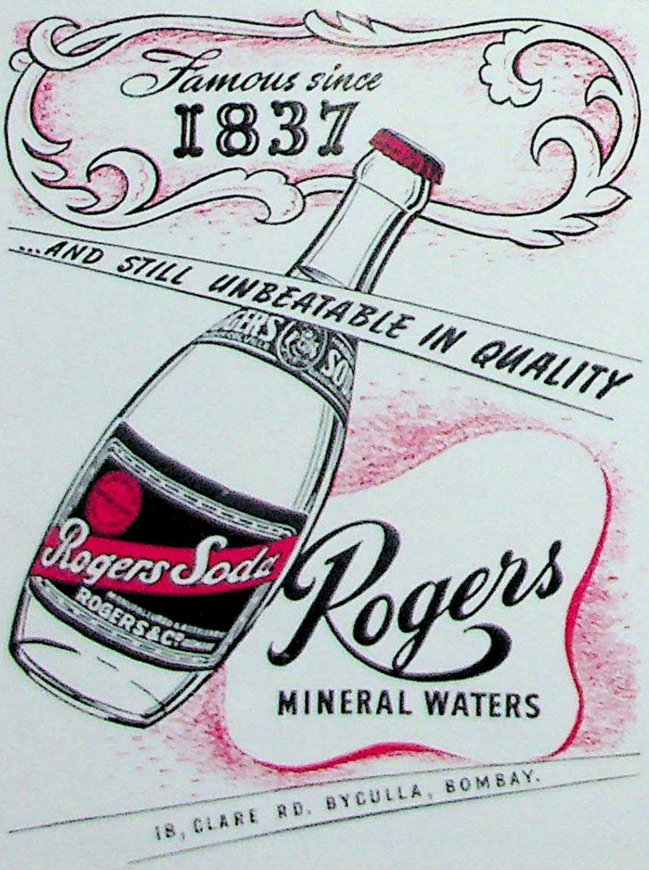

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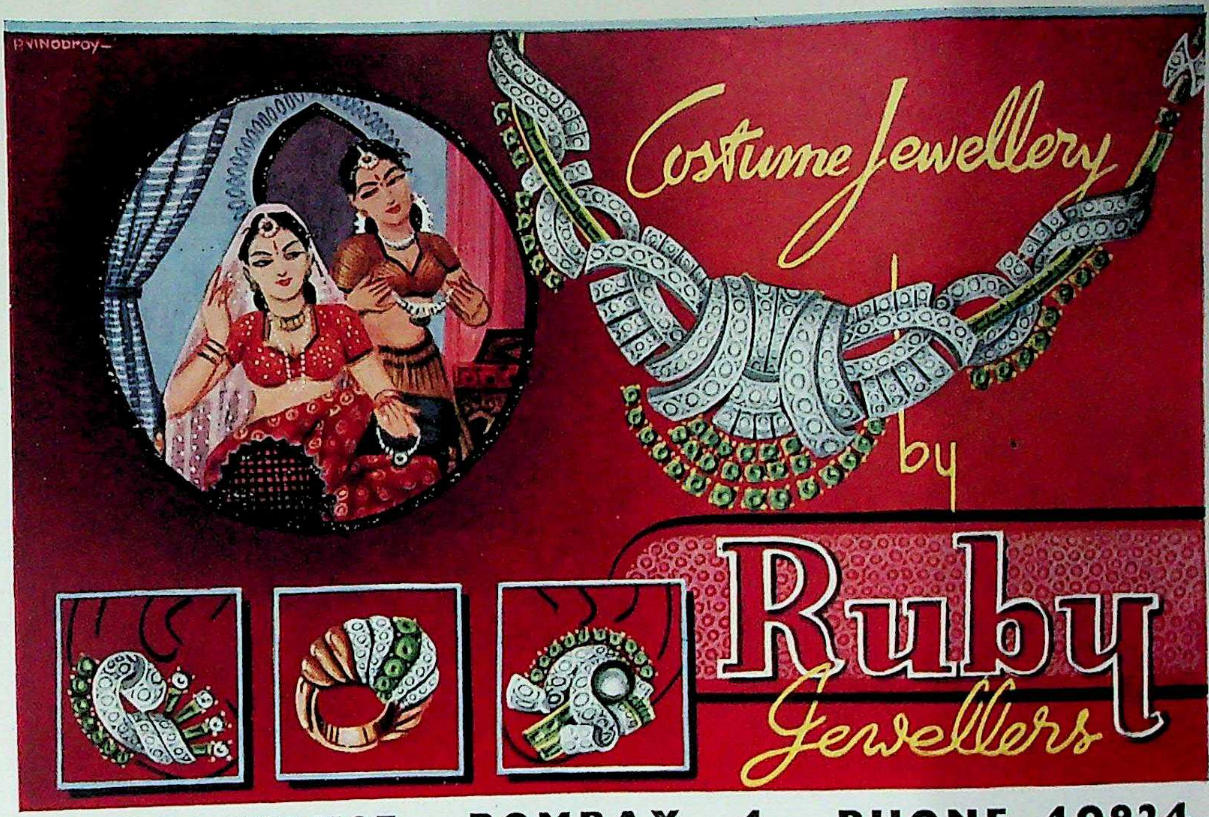

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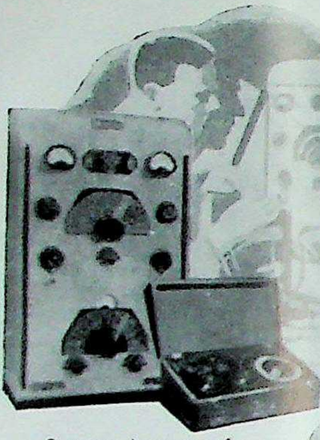

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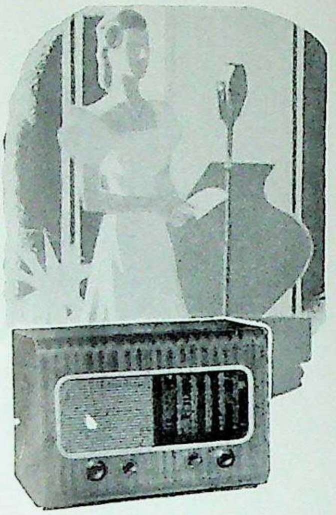

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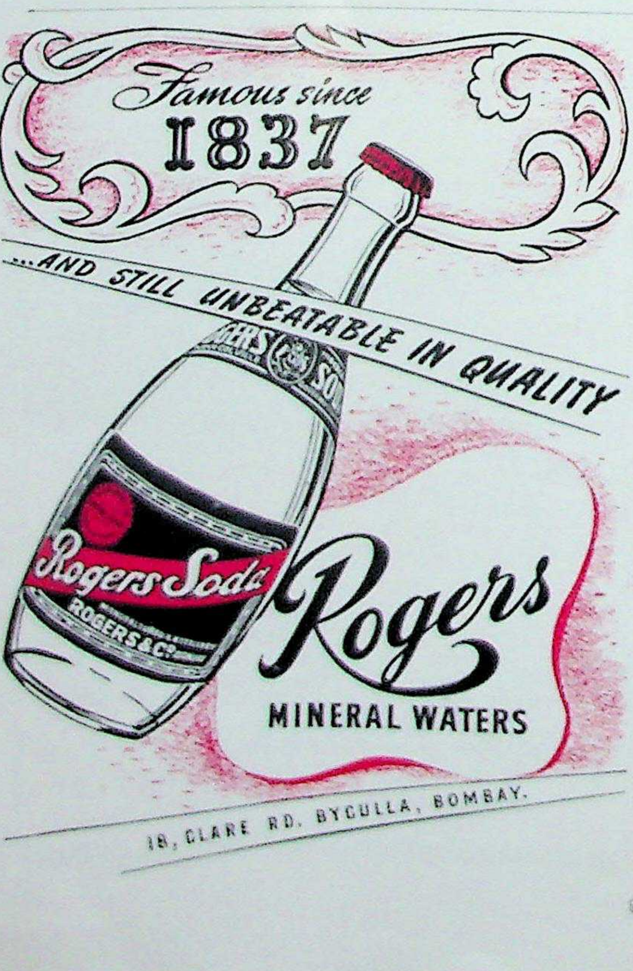
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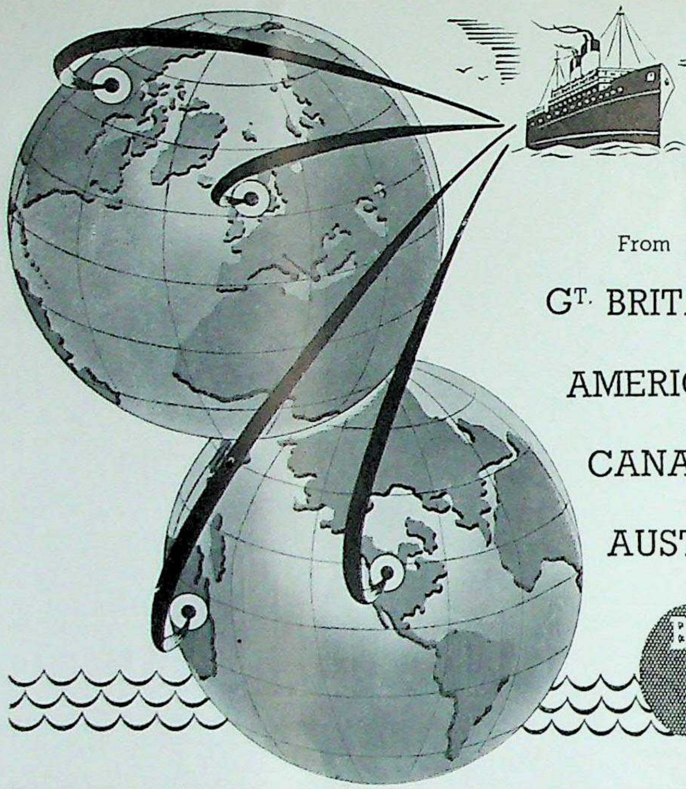

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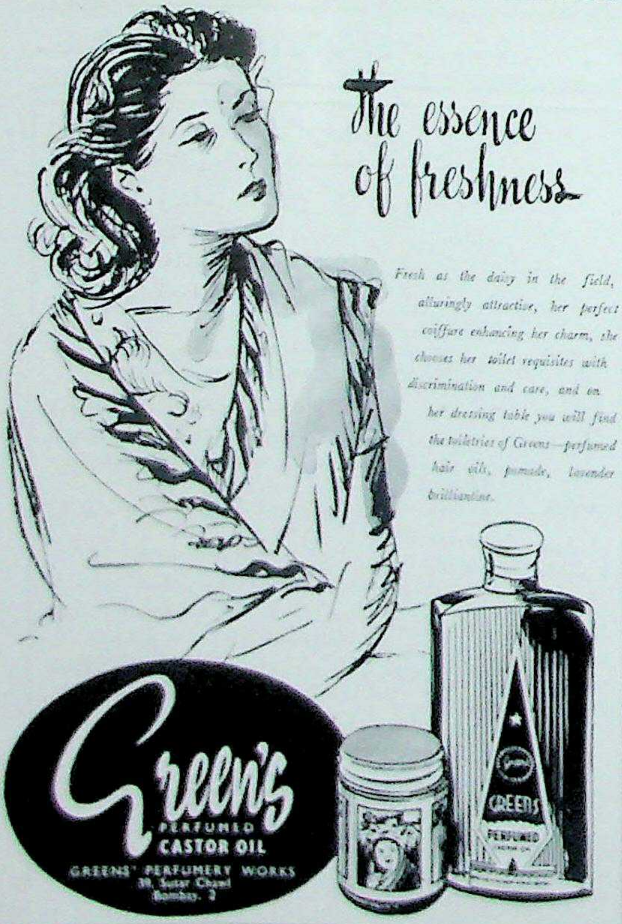

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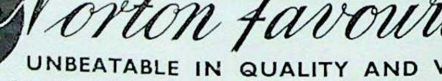
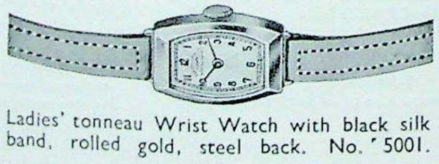
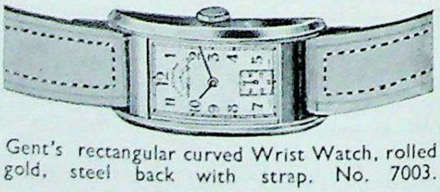


Ladies' tonneau Wrist Watch with black silk band, rolled gold, steel back. No. 5001.



Gent's rectangular curved Wrist Watch, rolled gold, steel back with strap. No. 7003.



Gent's 10½" tonneau Wrist Watch with round glass, rolled gold, steel back. No. 1001.

Illustrated Catalogue on application

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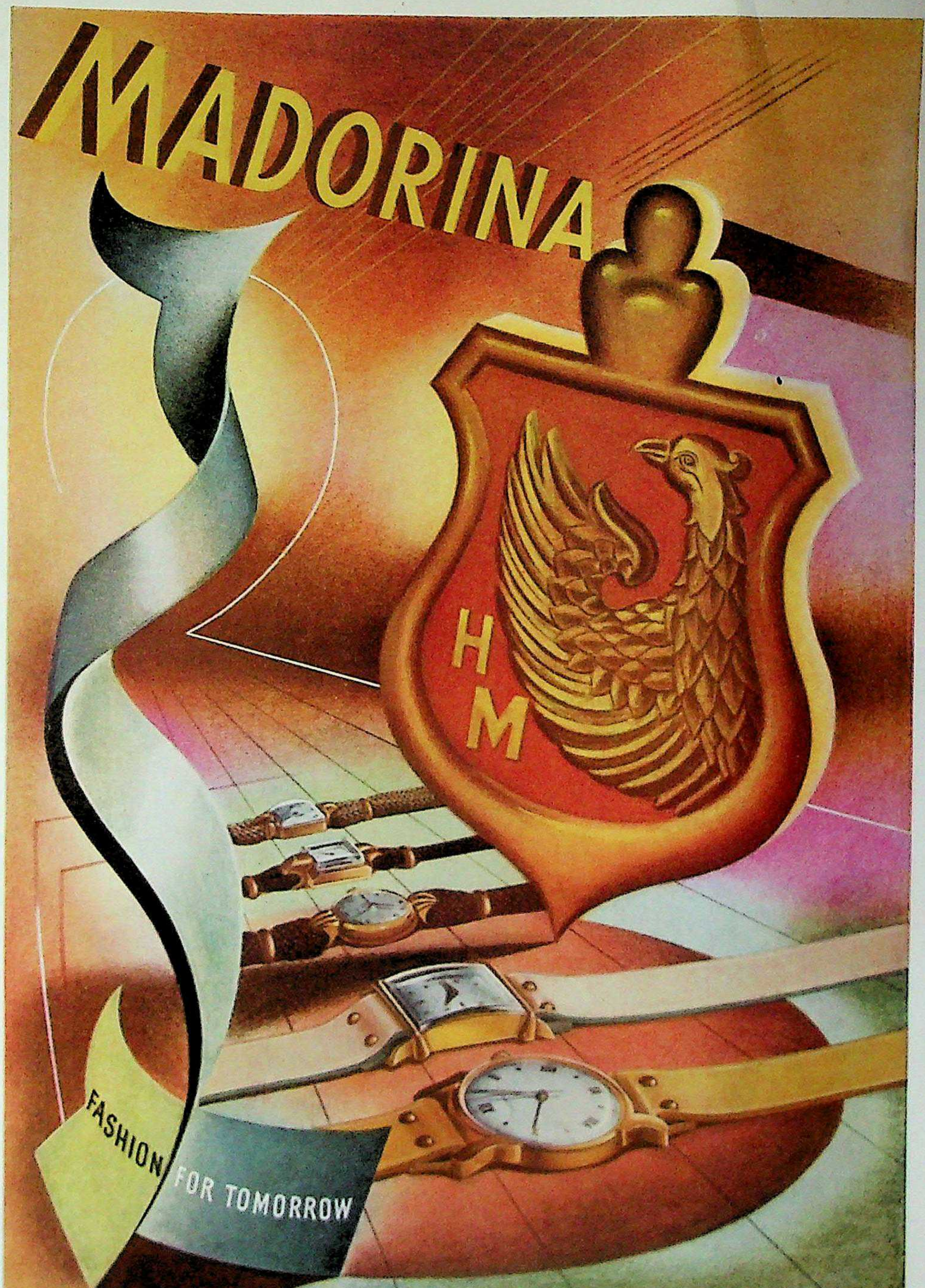
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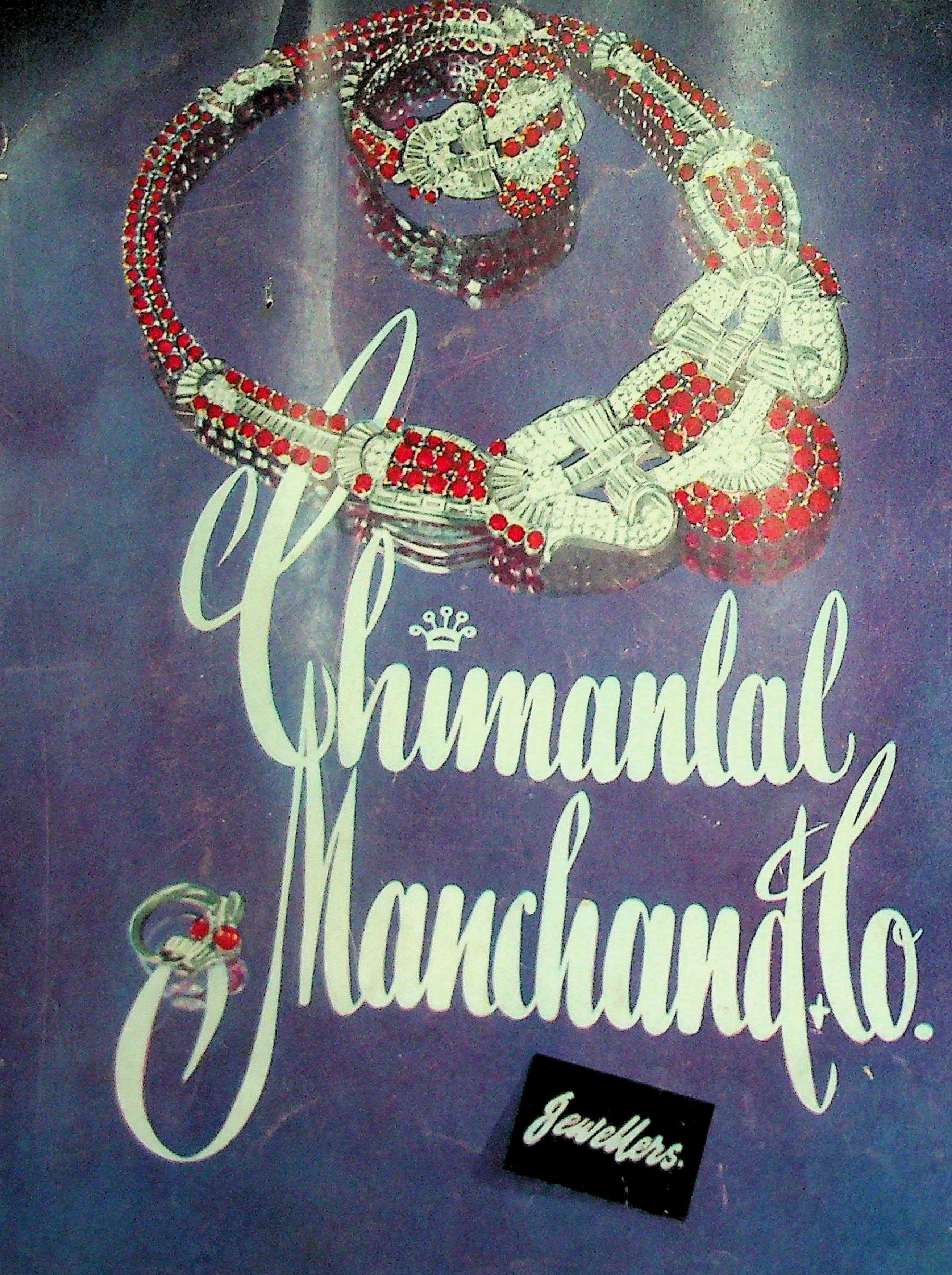

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